The Nation.

December 24, 1990 $1.75 U.S./$2.25 Canada

DEC 17

EAST ORANGE NJ 07019
ART ACQUISITIONS
PERIODICALS
UPSALA COLLEGE LIBRARY
13 4155 NAN518 18FEB91
*********3-DIGIT 070

EDITORIAL

CHOOSE PEACE

The choice in the Persian Gulf conflict has never been between sanctions and force. It is between peace and war, between life and death. The party of death, which prefers self-descriptions that cover its thirst for conquest with appeals to the great tradition of just wars and lesser evils, has since August 2 seen sanctions as a kind of ritualistic foreplay to the violent penetration of an entire region of the globe. President Bush manipulated the various United Nations sanctions votes as he sent Secretary of State Baker to bribe and buy a favorable "use of force" resolution, putting a specious international gloss on his deadly designs for war and, not inconsequentially, buying time for the Pentagon to amass the most destructive invasion force since D-Day. The issue is not how soon, or how effectively, sanctions would work. It is how soon Bush believes he can get away with abandoning them. The polls, the pressures of a self-aggrandizing war coalition and the uncertain formations of a nascent antiwar movement will set the time frame—rather than any true test of sanctions themselves. (For an assessment of the costs of war, see the special report beginning on page 791.)

Of course sanctions can work. They do all the time, whether imposed by one or two nations or an

(*Continued on Page 809*)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS.

TRUTH, JUSTICE AND IMPUNITY

New York City

We were disturbed by part of Aryeh Neier's "Watching Rights" column of November 19 on the question of military accountability for human rights violations. He writes that "a consensus has emerged in the human rights movement worldwide that while both truth and justice are needed . . . truth is the more important" and that "justice ranks after truth." We strongly disagree that such a consensus exists.

We are part of Coalition Against Impunity, a coalition of nongovernmental organizations working within the United Nations and elsewhere on the issue of military accountability, and the legal, social, moral and political implications of impunity. We coordinate with dozens of human rights organizations and groups of relatives of the victims, in Latin America and elsewhere. None have given secondary rank to the principle of justice in the struggle to establish the rule of law under new civilian governments. Rather, the overwhelming view is that truth and justice are indivisible aspects of the same process, one incomplete without the other. Certainly there are those who argue that military immunity from prosecution is a necessary evil for the consolidation of civilian rule. But many others insist that democracy cannot be built upon the sands of military impunity and a double standard of justice. Indeed, one of the legacies of military rule is the bitter divisions in societies over this very question.

A letter cannot fully discuss the many difficulties and paradoxes involved in this controversial issue. But a strong current of opinion is that failure to bring military criminals to justice actually undermines civilian authority, by opening the door for right-wing factions to rebel whenever they oppose government policies. It is by no means assured that attempts to appease unrepentant military institutions or factions will succeed.

As the U.N. Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances stated in its January report: "Perhaps the single most important factor contributing to the phenomenon of disappearances may be that of impunity. The Working Group's experience over the past ten years has confirmed the age-old adage that impunity breeds contempt for the law. Perpetrators of human rights violations, whether civilian or military, will become all the more brazen when they are not held to account before a court of law." Impunity is interpreted by military officers as tacit approval of their methods. Measures that place the military above the rule of law reinforce its autonomous position and political power.

Even the case of Argentina has been interpreted in different ways. While many agree that Alfonsín had to make concessions to the military, others argue that those concessions caused Alfonsín to lose crucial support from his social base, thus weakening his legitimacy and his ability to govern. They argue that by capitulating to military demands for impunity, civilian governments underestimate the strong social demands for justice, accountability and democratic institution-building in their societies. Polls in countries that had military regimes (most recently Chile) have consistently shown that large majorities believe that crimes of state terror should be *punished*, not just acknowledged.

Last but not least, those military regimes committed crimes against humanity and violations of international criminal law, which are exempt from amnesties under international law. Covenants violated by the military regimes include the Convention Against Genocide, the Convention Against Torture and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

As Neier notes, the way a new civilian government deals with the question of military accountability deeply shapes the process of democratization. A society that allows torturers and murderers free rein is a society that faces a dubious future.

Oscar Bolioli, director
Latin American/Caribbean Office
National Council of Churches
Esmeralda Brown, U.N. representative
Service for Peace and Justice/
Latin America (Serpaj)
Sister Bernadette Desmond
U.N. representative
Federation of the Relatives
of the Disappeared (Fedefam)

NEIER REPLIES

New York City

"Consensus" may not have been the best chosen word; in retrospect, I think I should have described the view that justice ranks after truth as "predominant." That might have made it clearer that there are also other currents of opinion on this question. For example, whenever I have discussed accountability for past abuses with human rights leaders in the Soviet Union, I have encountered not only the view that truth is the more important but also outright opposition to the punishment of those responsible for state crimes, including the ghastly crimes of the Stalin era. Essentially, the view that has been expressed by leaders of the Memorial Society and others concerned with documenting the crimes of the past is that so many people were responsible for those crimes that prosecuting them would tear the country to shreds. For different reasons, most of the South African human rights leaders with whom I have discussed this question also oppose prosecution. They argue that an amnesty is essential to persuade whites to yield power and make way for a post-apartheid society.

The views expressed by the authors of the letter reflect another minority current. They state the views of many Latin American associations of families of victims of such abuses as disappearances. Some of these organizations—essentially solidarity groups rather than groups that themselves investigate and document human rights abuses or that provide legal representation to the victims of abuses—are federated in the organization represented by one of the letter's authors, Fedefam.

As far as what I now refer to as the "predominant" view is concerned, it was expressed in a report that was published following a November 1988 Aspen Institute conference on "State Crimes: Punishment or Pardon," which brought together some of the best-known human rights leaders from Brazil, Chile, Haiti, South Korea, Uganda, Uruguay and several other countries that have suffered under cruel military dictatorships, as well as legal philosophers and leaders of U.S. human rights groups. That report states: "Although there were different views as to the extent of the obligation to punish, there was common agreement that the successor government has an obligation to investigate and establish the facts so that the truth be known and be made part of the nation's history. Even in situations where pardon or clemency might be appropriate there should be no compromising of the obligation to discover and acknowledge the truth." (For an account of some of the discussion at this conference, see Lawrence Weschler's fine book, *A Miracle, A Universe: Settling Accounts with Torturers.*) Not long after that conference my own organization, Human Rights Watch, convened a symposium on the subject in New York City in which human rights leaders from more than twenty countries took part. The results were the same, and they have been the same on just about every occasion when I have taken part in international meetings on this subject.

Finally, as I hope I made clear, I count myself among those who consider punishment essential, although I too give first place to truth; that is, state acknowledgment and disclosure of past abuses. My own reasons for espousing punishment have more to do with manifesting respect for the worth and dignity of the victims and for the supremacy of law than with the consequences for future governments. *Aryeh Neier*

COMING ON LIKE . . .

New Haven, Conn.

Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf Jr. comes on like gangbusters in his role as leader of U.S. forces in the Saudi desert. Schwarzkopf Sr. was not only "a former New Jersey cop," as Christopher Hitchens pointed out in "Minority Report" [Oct. 29]; he also hosted the *Gangbusters* radio show for many years. It figures that his son would be gung-ho about fighting America's most wanted international criminal of the moment. *Fenwick Anderson*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONTENTS.

Volume 251, Number 22

LETTERS
790

EDITORIALS
789 Choose Peace
791 The Costs of War

COLUMNS
794 Minority Report — *Christopher Hitchens*
809 Presidential Words — *Calvin Trillin*

ARTICLES
795 Haitian Elections: The Priest and His People — *Amy Wilentz*
796 Soviet Yuppies: The Romance of the Market — *Eric Foner*
800 Jobless-Insurance Cuts: Out of Work? Out of Luck — *Keith Brooks and Manny Ness*
804 *Nation*/I.F. Stone Award: A Mini-Bhopal in Galesburg — *Dave Newbart*

BOOKS & THE ARTS
810 Grass: Two States—One Nation? — *John Leonard*
817 Some With a Fountain Pen — *Richard Parker*

Illustrations by Monica Incisa

Editor, Victor Navasky

Executive Editor, Richard Lingeman; *Associate Editors*, George Black, Andrew Kopkind; *Assistant Editor*, Micah L. Sifry; *Literary Editor*, Elsa Dixler; *Associate Literary Editor*, Art Winslow; *Poetry Editor*, Grace Schulman; *Managing Editor*, JoAnn Wypijewski; *Copy Chief*, Roane Carey; *Copy Editor*, Judith Long; *Assistant Copy Editor*, Anne-Marie Otey; *Assistant to the Editor*, Dennis Selby; *Interns*, Sefka Cibulka, Nicholas Clegg, Alyssa Katz, George Lerner, Danzy Senna (Washington), Peter Siskind, Claire Thevenoux, Saralyn Wilson.

Departments: *Architecture*, Jane Holtz Kay; *Art*, Arthur C. Danto; *Dance*, Mindy Aloff; *Fiction*, John Leonard; *Films*, Stuart Klawans; *Lingo*, Jim Quinn; *Music*, David Hamilton, Edward W. Said, Gene Santoro; *Theater*, Thomas M. Disch, Moira Hodgson; *Bureaus*: *Washington*, Kai Bird; *Europe*, Daniel Singer; *United Kingdom*, E.P. Thompson; *Paris*, Claude Bourdet; *Corporations*, Robert Sherrill; *Defense*, Michael T. Klare; *Columnists and Regular Contributors*: Alexander Cockburn (*Beat the Devil*), Stephen F. Cohen (*Sovieticus*), Christopher Hitchens (*Minority Report*), Aryeh Neier (*Watching Rights*), Edward Sorel, Calvin Trillin; *Contributing Editors*: Kai Bird, Thomas Ferguson, Doug Henwood, Max Holland, Molly Ivins, Jefferson Morley, Katha Pollitt, Joel Rogers, Kirkpatrick Sale, Herman Schwartz, Michael Thomas, Gore Vidal, Jon Wiener; *Editorial Board*: Norman Birnbaum, Richard Falk, Frances FitzGerald, Philip Green, Elinor Langer, Deborah W. Meier, Toni Morrison, Michael Pertschuk, Elizabeth Pochoda, Neil Postman, Marcus G. Raskin, A.W. Singham, David Weir, Roger Wilkins. *Editors at Large*, Richard Pollak, Katrina vanden Heuvel. *On Leave*, David Corn.

Manuscripts: The magazine cannot be responsible for the return of unsolicited manuscripts unless accompanied by addressed, stamped envelopes.

Publisher, Arthur L. Carter

President, David Parker; *Associate Publisher and General Manager*, Neil Black; *Associate Publisher and Advertising Director*, Chris Calhoun; *Advertising Sales Representative*, Caerthan Banks; *Classified Advertising Director*, Gary Pomerantz; *Business Manager*, Ann B. Epstein; *Bookkeepers*, Ivor A. Richardson, Shirleathia Watson; *Art/Production Manager*, Jane Sharples; *Vice President and Circulation Director*, Margaret Pyle; *Subscription Manager*, Cookee V. Klein; *Circulation Coordinator*, Jacqueline Lucas; *Receptionists*, Greta Loell, Vivette Dhanukdhari; *Data Entry and Mail Coordinator*, John Holtz; *Administrative Secretary*, Shirley Sulat; *Production*, Terry Miller; *Typography*, Sandy McCroskey; *Vice President and Nation Associates Director*, Sandra Zickefoose, *Nation Associates Assistant Director*, Carlos Durazo; *Permissions and Back Issues*, Josh Neufeld; *Publicity and Special Projects Director*, Peter G. Meyer.

The Nation (ISSN 0027-8378) is published weekly (except for the first week in January, and biweekly in July and August) by The Nation Company, Inc. © 1990 in the U.S.A. by The Nation Company, Inc., 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011. (212) 242-8400. *Washington Bureau:* Suite 308, 110 Maryland Avenue N.E., Washington, DC 20002. (202) 546-2239. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. International Telex: 667 155 NATION. Subscription orders, changes of address and all subscription inquiries: *The Nation*, P.O. Box 10763, Des Moines IA 50340-0763. *Subscription Price*: 1 year, $44; 2 years, $75. Add $14 for surface mail postage outside U.S. Missed issues must be claimed within 60 days (120 days foreign) of publication date. **Please allow 4-6 weeks for receipt of your first issue and for all subscription transactions.** Back issues $3 prepaid ($4 foreign) from: *The Nation*, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011. *The Nation* is available on microfilm from: University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Nation*, P.O. Box 10763, Des Moines IA 50340-0763. This issue went to press on December 6.

EDITORIALS.

The Costs of War

"This will not be another Vietnam," says George Bush. Agreed: The Iraq Syndrome from which we will one day suffer, if war comes, will be different from the Vietnam Syndrome—and perhaps much worse. For the Pentagon the main lesson of Vietnam was to avoid gradual escalation. This time, the military will use maximum firepower from day one. "The lethality of the battlefield in a single day will overshadow the whole Vietnam War," says Marine Col. Carl Fulford. Second, Vietnam was the engine that drove the economy for more than a decade of sustained growth, but war with Iraq is more likely to deepen the present recession. Third, while Vietnam defied the predictions of the domino theorists, war with Iraq will trigger incalculable repercussions in the Middle East. This time we will not be able to retire and sulk over distant wreckage; it may pursue us into every corner of our lives.

Those who have planned the Bush Administration's war-fighting strategy assume that it was the incremental conduct of the war in Vietnam that bred public alienation. But that has led to a central fallacy: that there is only one way—the Vietnam way—that war will traumatize and divide the American people. Already, public anxiety is at a pitch that it did not reach for years over Vietnam. If the likely costs of a gulf war were spelled out, it would only grow more acute.

But Bush, like Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon before him, prefers not to be encumbered by informed public debate. Here, for all the differences, is the continuity between Vietnam and Iraq. Twenty years ago, thanks to the Pentagon Papers, we learned some of what had been suppressed. Today, we cannot know for certain what the Ad-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ministration is keeping from us about the costs of war. But here are some informed guesses.

The Battlefield

For weeks all the talk was of air superiority. There was the optimists' *Top Gun* scenario, in which Saddam Hussein would be driven out by a two- or three-day aerial blitzkrieg, and the longer-range bombing campaign proposed by analysts such as Edward Luttwak, who believe that even a successful ground war would be so devastating that it would cost George Bush his presidency. But air power "alone didn't work on the Ho Chi Minh trail, and it won't work on the battlefield of the future," says Gen. Ed Scholes, chief of staff for most of the Army troops in Saudi Arabia. Gen. Colin Powell, during Senate hearings on December 3, appeared to agree, deriding the reliance on air power as an "alleged low-cost, incremental, may-work" strategy. He too would start with airstrikes, but in order to create the best conditions for an inevitable ground war. This in turn could take a number of courses, depending on whether the goal was to force Iraq out of Kuwait or whether, as many defense analysts believe, it would necessarily involve an assault on Baghdad.

The combined air-sea-ground operation that Powell foresees would kill more Iraqis than Americans—perhaps three times as many. Countless civilians would also be killed or wounded—100,000 or more if Baghdad is attacked, according to the Center for Defense Information (C.D.I.), a Washington think tank staffed by retired military officers. Many more will be at risk if chemical warfare installations are bombed.

But debate in the United States will necessarily turn on U.S. casualties. "The American people will support this operation until body bags come home," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Michael Dugan in the infamous interview that led to his dismissal. The body bags, unfortunately, will be coming home in great numbers. (For comparison, bear in mind U.S. deaths on the battlefield in other conflicts since World War II: Vietnam 47,244; Korea 33,629; Panama 23; Grenada 19.)

§ 5,000 dead and 15,000 wounded in the first ten days (*Newsweek*)—as many as in an average year in Vietnam.

§ 10,000 dead and 35,000 wounded in a successful ninety-day campaign to take Baghdad (C.D.I.).

§ As many as 30,000 dead in twenty days, says columnist Jack Anderson, citing "top-secret Pentagon estimates."

§ The Pentagon has in place blood supplies to treat 4,000 casualties per day—a heavier casualty rate than at Iwo Jima.

It may also be helpful to consider the only direct recent precedent for a short, intense desert war—the 1973 Arab-Israeli conflict, which produced 20,000 casualties in two weeks. Let's also be clear that "casualties" means the wounded as well as the dead. Because of new battlefield technology developed since 1973, "things are going to happen to people that we have never seen before," in the words of one U.S. weapons designer. Military surgeons and the V.A. hospitals are unprepared, for example, to handle "blast lung" and "metal fume fever" and the other arcane and nightmarish injuries that will afflict tank and armored vehicle crews. Weapons expert Donald Kennedy, writing in the military journal *Armor*, says this is "a subject that most governments do not wish to publicize for fear of its effect on their armed forces."

The lower of the body counts we have cited depend on everything going right on the battlefield. But it never does. Murphy's Law was invented by the military. The death toll could rise to Korean War levels, or higher, in any of a number of circumstances. (1) How effective will the Iraqi defense of Kuwait City be? Iraq's strategy, rather like the Viet Cong's, will be to inflict casualty levels that are politically unacceptable in the United States. (2) U.S. air superiority is not a given, especially if the Iraqis have mastered the U.S.-made Hawk missile systems they are believed to have seized in Kuwait. (3) High technology often disappoints those infatuated with it. The F-117 Stealth fighter, which was a flop in Panama, will be an essential element of the air war. The M-1 tank is untested in desert conditions, and the Israelis believe it may prove a major disappointment. The Apache "tank-killer" helicopter develops a maintenance problem every fifty-four minutes of flying time. Night-vision equipment is untested. (4) Multinational command and control might well break down in combat. There is also a high risk of casualties from "friendly fire." Syrian and Iraqi equipment is identical. (5) All of the above assumes that Israel will be kept out of the war. (6) What does "winning" this war mean, anyway? It may become necessary, in the immortal phrase, to destroy Kuwait City in order to save it. And what if the infidels capture the ancient Islamic metropolis of Baghdad, or "make its rubble bounce" with aerial bombing? In this war, military "success" may be directly proportional to political disaster.

The Region

President Bush says his goal is the security and stability of the Middle East, and he holds out the promise of a "new world order" once Saddam Hussein's aggression is punished and Kuwait is freed. But Middle East experts agree that the more likely outcome would be greater chaos.

Consider the existing unstable balance of forces, starting with the historic rivalry of the city-states of Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo for hegemony. Add the oil wealth, the way the Western powers have directed and defended its exploitation, and the class and nationalistic resentments generated among the have-nots; factor in the Muslim movement for purification and rejection of the West, led primarily by Iran; and then overlay Israel's saber rattling and de facto annexation of the occupied territories (paid for by the United States). Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the subsequent responses of the American-Saudi-Syrian-Egyptian-(Israeli) axis are already generating tremendous and contradictory pressures in the Middle East. War would transform the region.

If the war leaves Iraq intact, it will by definition be a weak Iraq. The occupiers or the pro-Western government they install will be hard pressed to ignore Kurdish demands for freedom. Then, according to former National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Syria, Iran and even Turkey . . . might all be tempted to pursue their own territorial interests." Syria, emboldened by its U.S.-approved takeover of Leba-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

non, "might begin to make some moves against Jordan," says Raymond Tanter, a senior N.S.C. staff specialist on the Middle East in the early 1980s. The Iranians have a special interest in Shiite holy sites in oil-rich southern Iraq. An Iranian move on that region, says former U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia James Akins, would create "a super oil power with three times the population of Iraq and a far greater potential for causing trouble in the gulf." And the Turks no doubt would want to reclaim the Iraqi province of Mosul.

As for the future of "our friends in the region," ponder the C.D.I.'s prediction of 100,000 or more civilian casualties from air attacks in a battle for Baghdad. The prospect of being held responsible for such a toll terrifies Egypt's Hosni Mubarak and Syria's Hafez al-Assad, both of whom have insisted that their troops will not be used offensively. Akins warns that "every Arab country that backed us – even if their troops were not directly involved in offensive actions – would have revolutions. . . . Only the Saudis, backed by U.S. troops, would maintain control. The ruling family couldn't afford to let us leave. There would be a long-term U.S. occupation, the people would turn against us, the army would turn against us."

And what if, as is likely, Saddam deliberately attacks Israel, or the Israelis decide to "pre-empt" what they claim or believe to be an imminent attack? Most observers agree that Israeli-Iraqi fighting on Jordanian territory is likely, an event that would probably spell the end of the Hashemite kingdom. There are reports that the United States has asked Israel to "absorb" an Iraqi blow without retaliating; in exchange such a blow would be treated as a *casus belli*, akin to an Iraqi attack on Saudi Arabia. But if an offensive from Saudi soil had already begun, the Iraqis would have little to lose by attacking Israel and a lot to gain. "Much as we want to coordinate our steps with our friends," writes Ze'ev Schiff, military correspondent for *Ha'aretz*, "we may happen to be forced to act unilaterally." The actual extent of U.S.-Israeli coordination remains a mystery, although the remarks of the recently dismissed General Dugan to the effect that the Air Force was getting targeting advice from Israel are somewhat enlightening. Former C.I.A. Middle East analyst Graham Fuller, now at the Rand Corporation, says, "If Israel is involved in any way . . . it will transform the character of the conflict overnight."

The Economy

If the shooting starts, the only given is that oil prices will soar far beyond the point they've been driven to by the threat of war and the greed of the oil companies. According to a U.N. simulation, oil at $40 a barrel would cost poor oil-importing countries $64 billion on their trade balances and developed market economies $177 billion.

And the United States itself?

§ The Defense Department's original estimate for keeping 200,000 troops in the gulf for a year without a war was $15 billion.

§ Congressional Budget Office sources say the buildup could bring that figure to $20 billion or $30 billion.

§ The C.D.I. places noncombat costs at $74 million a day; combat would absorb several times that amount.

§ Extrapolating from the experience of Vietnam, whose cost military planners had underestimated, anticipating a quick, "clean" war, it is reasonable to assume that military costs could be at $50 billion to $60 billion after a year. Assuming that sanctions were to take a maximum two years to work and assuming too – against all principle and common sense – that the original deployment was maintained over that period, the direct cost of sanctions would be half as much as a year of war (four months actual fighting) with all its imponderables.

Yet a fuller sense of the cost of fighting needs to include indirect expenditures, such as military and economic assistance to other countries, increases in veterans' benefits, lost income from deaths and injuries and interest on the national debt. Back in 1973 Tom Riddell, now an economist at Smith College, calculated that the $141 billion military outlay for Vietnam between 1965 and 1974 came to $676 billion when those costs were added in. It would be crude simply to slot expectations about one war into the niche molded by the discrete circumstances of another – and therefore to conclude that the military estimate of $50 billion for a gulf war translates neatly into $240 billion with indirect expenditures – but the comparison is useful for suggesting the direction the costs of a shooting war might take.

All this will clearly add to the deficit. Interest rates will rise, exacerbating the recession at home. The housing industry, already on its knees, would be hard hit, maybe flattened. All industries that use large amounts of energy and aren't involved in war production would be troubled. Business investment, particularly for the long term, would drop, and the economy would fall further behind in developing technologies and producing goods that people need or want. Meanwhile, every percentage point added to U.S. interest lays a murderous $10 billion onto Third World indebtedness.

There has been much talk of foreign, particularly gulf state, assistance offsetting the costs of the U.S. military deployment – a kind of Vietnamization in reverse. And in fact, if Saudi Arabia were to bail out all the costs and were to pump enough oil to hold prices down, recessionary effects of a war might be minimal or nonexistent, according to economics Nobel laureate Lawrence Klein. As it is, the United States has received about $4 billion from other countries: a couple billion from Kuwait and $987 million (out of a promised $12 billion) from the Saudis.

Cost-benefit assessments never provide sufficient reason for opposing war – what if we *could* afford it? – although they have been used for promoting it. The rapid injection of vast sums into the economy does act as a stimulus, at least in the short term, but because of oil prices and the size of the deficit, a gulf war would be very tricky here. And as the United States "invests" in war to protect oil, it forgoes the prospect of applying resources for building alternative energy systems – one of many bitter ironies.

Calvin Trillin appears on page 809.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

Jidda/Dhahran, Saudi Arabia

The person I most wanted to see while visiting "The Kingdom," as its familiars always refer to it, was Idi Amin. Ever since he was driven from Uganda by an ungrateful people, he has been the recipient of Islamic hospitality from the House of Saud. This puts him in the company of the *contras*, Renamo of Mozambique, Jonas Savimbi and the Hekmatyar faction of the Afghan fundamentalists as the beneficiary of King Fahd's revenues. But nobody seemed to want to discuss this "sensitive" topic, and Saudi "sensitivities" are given a very high ranking in the best circles these days. Whether it is the right of American women to drive jeeps, the right of Jewish soldiers to observe Yom Kippur or the right of a journalist to bring a book into the country, we are all instructed that these dignified sensitivities must come first. (Indeed, Western ambassadors have summoned reporters and told them that if there is one more story about the recent Saudi women's protest about the driving ban, those responsible will lose their visas at once.) The Mutawaeen, King Fahd's religious police, are on hand at all times to give point to these edicts.

Thwarted in my quest for Amin, I had to make do with watching the Leader of the Free World. He is also, through slush-fund arrangements that have yet to be clarified with Congress, a recipient of Saudi largesse. So are the troops he came to review. At Jidda airport, as a gliding staircase brought King Fahd shimmering down to the red carpet, it didn't seem entirely clear which potentate was the client. Bush admittedly looked healthier and stronger, but then, as a well-informed local whispered to me when I remarked on the haggard mien of the King, "You wouldn't look too great either, if you were dying of cirrhosis of the liver."

Not much danger of cirrhosis in the beer-free zone of Desert Shield at Dhahran, where a contingent of soldiers was drawn up to hear Bush. An empty rostrum was mounted in a circle of F-15 jet fighters, giving a suitably martial aspect to the theater. A loudspeaker announcement warned the audience that the President was not to be pestered with requests for autographs or offers of gifts—the last stipulation drawing sarcastic cackles.

These young Americans are impressively good-humored and amazingly willing to trust authority. Rumor is everywhere, and I get asked my opinion on the most arcane matters. Is it true, for example, that the British soldiers are getting a thousand-dollar bonus from the Saudis? If so, where is our bonus? (This from a woman Pfc. from Fort Hood who I won't name.) "But wouldn't that make you a mercenary?" "We wouldn't mind being mercenaries!" (Nods of agreement all around.) Staff Sgt. Anna MacCauley from Boston, when asked how long she expects to be here, laughs and says, "God knows—or Bush knows."

Then I talk to a Saudi fighter technician named Haman Gazzazz. Did he ever expect to be deployed against another Arab nation? "It will never happen." "You mean you don't think there will be a war?" "I don't know about this time. I mean that it will never happen *again*." He pauses. "About this time, I don't know. Only God knows." When he says "God knows," he says it very differently from Sergeant MacCauley.

Then Bush is there, flanked by his First Lady and by Senators Dole and Mitchell and Congressmen Foley and Michel, the last four of whom are wearing what used to be called shit-eating grins. Thus invested with the holy right to employ the word "bipartisan," Bush makes an adroit and cunning speech. His aides have told him two things in advance. The first is that Gen. Colin Powell and Secretary of State James Baker, on previous visits, were the target of soldiers' bitter comments and satirical offers of lousy food and mugs of stale water. The second is that opinion polls show the American public to be opposed to war with Iraq, unless the war is presented as a means of denuclearizing Saddam Hussein. So the soldiers want to go home, and the public wants nonproliferation. Bush believes in giving people what they want. He tells the soldiers, who have been selected in advance for their good behavior in different units, that their period of waiting and uncertainty will not be a long one. And, for the first time highlighting Iraq's potential nuclear capacity, he says that this, too, contributes to "our sense of urgency."

"Notice how Barbara always leads the clapping," says Pfc. Kathy Swegar, but I'm trying to make sense of what I have just heard—the latest in a long series of justifications. First there was the defense of Saudi Arabia, which nobody believes was Saddam's target anyway. Then came the restoration of Kuwaiti sovereignty. Then came strategic raw materials, sometimes known as oil. Then came "jobs" (James Baker's explanation of what is certainly, at 400,000 troops, a labor-intensive operation). Now it seems that we are embarking on a war to uphold—at last—the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. But if that means anything, it must mean a strike against Iraq itself. To push Saddam out of Kuwait would not be to destroy his plant and infrastructure. So there arises the question, If Saddam believes that Iraq is the real target, what incentive does he have to undo his crimes in Kuwait?

Rub' al Khali is what the first travelers to this kingdom learned to call the expanse of desert to the south of us. "The Empty Quarter." It's filling up quite rapidly now. A network of American bases and listening posts and airstrips is extending all across the peninsula. According to Safar al Hawali, who is dean of Islamic studies at Umm al-Qura University in Mecca, this mega-deployment represents the vindication of a long-meditated American ambition to occupy Saudi Arabia, an ambition that long predates Saddam's exorbitance and expansionism. Hawali points to speeches and writings from past American Presidents and generals expressing the desire for a permanent base in Saudi Arabia from which to dominate the Persian Gulf. He is a fundamentalist, but secular and twentieth-century Saudis express the same anxiety. Here is another "sensitivity," and one that is shared by many average Saudi citizens. But it is one that neither President Bush nor his legions of Orientalists seem to register.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ARTICLES.

HAITIAN ELECTIONS

The Priest and His People

AMY WILENTZ

In front of a burned-out church in downtown Port-au-Prince, Haiti, a crowd of several hundred gathered a few weeks ago to greet a priest. They were blocking the capital's main street, and it was hot out, but they didn't care. They had come to see the man they call "The Prophet." They snatched him up when he arrived, a small man in a guayabera with a bulletproof vest underneath it, and they hoisted him onto their shoulders. During the entire rally, his feet did not once touch the ground.

The priest, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, was no longer permitted to say mass at the church across the street, where he had once preached (or at any other Catholic church). That seemed to matter less now than it had two years ago, when he was expelled from his religious order for preaching politics, just three months after his church had been sacked and burned during his Sunday mass by forces loyal to the military dictatorship. It mattered less because now Aristide had become a politician. And the crowd greeted him not as a priest but as a presidential candidate.

On October 18, two days before candidate registration closed for Haiti's third attempt at elections in the five years since the dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier was ousted from power, Aristide declared his long-rumored candidacy. The announcement met with wild enthusiasm among the priest's youthful supporters, although some of his closest advisers did not approve and have chosen to remain aloof from the campaign. Like Aristide, these dissenters have always argued against elections, saying that until criminals from the old regimes have been brought to trial, no election in Haiti can be considered free and fair.

But many Haitians clearly feel—as Aristide seems to—that any election in which Aristide is a candidate is an election worth voting in. After he declared, voter registration for the December 16 election surged, especially in the department that includes Port-au-Prince, where more than a third of Haiti's registered voters live. Indeed, Aristide has always been a favorite with Haiti's outcast urban populations. In 1985 he began giving fiery good-versus-evil sermons that eventually helped bring the urban masses out onto the streets to protest Duvalier's regime. And as the Duvalierist forces regrouped and grew strong again after Duvalier's fall, Aristide did not cease to speak out against them and their presence in the post-Duvalier regimes, at a time when most opposition leaders were holding their peace, either out of fear or because they had begun to compromise. Aristide has been perceived for years as the unshakable, unswerving and unsuppressible spokesperson for Haiti's poor—which in Haiti means almost everyone.

The months preceding this year's presidential and legislative vote have been full of fits and starts. The stage was set for a reasonably democratic vote this past March, when Ertha Pascal Trouillot, one of the Supreme Court's least offensive members, was named President in the wake of the fall of Gen. Prosper Avril. More important for the success of elections than Trouillot's weak government, however, will be the cooperation of the Haitian military—if it agrees to cooperate—and the presence of international election observers. In October the United Nations and the Organization of American States formally announced that they would send huge observer teams to the elections.

The military is still a powerful retrogressive force in Haiti, as are the rich and corrupt Duvalierists. This year's electoral process is tainted by the memory of Haiti's 1987 elections, which also seemed to be going forward properly, only to end—on Election Day, November 29—in bullets, machetes, massacre and the declaration of a military dictatorship. The 1990 electoral calendar was tarnished last summer by the return to Haitian soil of Dr. Roger Lafontant, a former interior minister and leader of Duvalier's pampered paramilitary thugs, the Tonton Macoutes. Although a warrant was issued months ago for his arrest, the military has thus far been unable or disinclined to bring the doctor in. Lafontant declared his candidacy only to have it rejected by the electoral council in November. In 1987 a number of Duvalierist candidates were similarly denied a place on the ballot, and

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MONICA INCISA

Amy Wilentz is the author of The Rainy Season: Haiti Since Duvalier *(Simon and Schuster).*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

they are the ones, along with some military officers, who masterminded the attacks on voters that Election Day.

Already, this year's electoral violence has begun. On December 5, a group of armed men attacked an evening rally in Pétionville, a wealthy suburb of Port-au-Prince where a crowd of some 10,000 had gathered to hear Aristide speak. At least five people were killed and more than fifty wounded. Presumably, the assault was the work of the Duvalierists. The military remained aloof: "It's a political matter," the Pétionville commander was reported to have commented. Political or otherwise, it was obviously an attempt to scare Aristide's supporters away from the polling places. Few were able to forget the words of the Duvalierist youths who had participated in the attack on Aristide's church in 1988: "Wherever he preaches, there will be a mountain of corpses."

Although he was the latest entry into the electoral fray, Aristide is the clear front-runner. His closest competitor, Marc Bazin, a center-right former World Bank official, is not nearly as popular as the priest, though Bazin was a candidate in the 1987 elections and has built up a more impressive election organization than Aristide. Bazin's coalition party, the National Alliance for Democracy and Progress, is the only one putting up candidates for almost all of the 110 seats in the legislature. Aristide's group, the National Front for Change and Democracy, has managed to put up only fifty.

It is more than possible to imagine a stalemate should Aristide win the presidency and a Bazin coalition take the Parliament. In such a case, an impatient military—and the military is always impatient in Haiti—might be quick to step in. Perhaps hoping to avoid such a dangerous impasse, Aristide has reportedly been courting the socialist wing of Bazin's coalition (in Haiti, politics makes the strangest bedfellows), led by Serge Gilles, an intellectual with strong ties to the French Socialists. Aristide's people have encouraged rumors that Gilles may decide to go with Aristide's front, thereby giving the priest the parliamentary clout he would need in a future government. In such an administration Aristide would be President and Gilles Prime Minister. Bazin would be completely marginalized.

All this is, of course, to talk about Haiti as though it were accustomed to clean elections and as though its politicians, its military and other sectors of its ruling classes have a tradition of obeying constitutional norms and parliamentary protocol. Such anticipatory talk about the 1987 election, for example, proved ridiculous in retrospect, as voters lay decapitated and eviscerated at the polling places.

The United States, which has encouraged Haiti's post-Duvalier elections, has been extremely anxious to see that this one goes off better than the last two (a fraudulent presidential election in January 1988 gave rise to a civilian government soon toppled by the army that had put it in power). After Aristide (who has often been labeled a "radical firebrand" in embassy cables) announced his candidacy, Ambassador Alvin Adams continued to give assurances of U.S. neutrality in the electoral process.

But then the Ambassador, who is famous in Haiti for speaking in ambiguous Creole proverbs, cited this one: "Apre bal, tanbou lou" (When the party is over, the drums grow heavy). According to Haitians, he meant that after the fun of Aristide's campaign will come the hard task of governing, for which Aristide is ill suited.

The charges most often leveled against Aristide during his short campaign (by his adversaries but also sometimes by his friends) are that he is a charismatic religious figure singularly unfit for administrative work; that this unsuitability will lead to a crisis in which he is forced to take absolute power or cede power to the military; that he has no longstanding organization behind him; and that his popularity is based on a cult of personality like that of François (Papa Doc) Duvalier, which can lead to dictatorship.

But Aristide himself believes that he is running to bring the Haitian people to power, and that the firm connections he has made with progressive middle-class technocrats and intellectuals over the years will stand him in good stead as an executive. Aristide, no slouch himself on the proverb front, replied to Adams, "Anpil men, chay pa lou" (With many hands, the burden is never heavy). □

SOVIET YUPPIES

The Romance of The Market

ERIC FONER

For four months last spring, I taught American history at Moscow State University and, with my wife and 2-year-old daughter, braved the ever-increasing difficulties of daily life in the city. Over the years, many visitors to the Soviet Union have arrived with a fully formed mental image and have seen what they came to see. This was not our experience.

We came to Moscow expecting to find a society reveling in new-found intellectual openness and engaged in an exciting debate over its future. We soon discovered, however, that the early euphoria of *glasnost* had faded. Now, the public mood is one of cynicism about the past and present coupled with deep pessimism about the future. Instead of a spirited, multisided discussion of the country's economic and political restructuring, we found a political situation oddly reminiscent of America's: genuine freedom of speech but little real difference of opinion in public discussion.

On television, in the newspapers and in private conversations (at least among the academic, intellectual and artistic circles in which we traveled), praise of the "free market" is universal. Debate centers on the pace of change, not its direction. Those who voice doubts about the benefits of the impending "market revolution" are dismissed as representatives of the "old thinking."

Eric Foner is DeWitt Clinton Professor of American History at Columbia University. From February through May 1990, he taught as Fulbright Lecturer in American History at Moscow State University.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Photo: Rick Reinhard

An Urgent Appeal from
Ramsey Clark

HELP THEM KEEP HOPE ALIVE FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Through direct material aid, PAS helps Palestinians build schools, organize cooperatives, feed refugees, provide badly-needed medical care, and re-build their homes.

And that's not all. PAS's educational activities, speaking tours, and joint Palestinian-Jewish cultural programs in the United States have helped to sensitize Americans to the need for a just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

With your assistance, PAS can help Palestinians build a future.

Your support is needed more than ever—now that the Gulf conflict has worsened the already difficult situation of the Palestinians. The increasing cost of resistance to Israeli occupation is denying thousands of Palestinians even basic necessities like adequate food and clothing.

PAS has launched an emergency aid program for 1991. Funds raised will go a long way toward continued support for the following programs:

- A Family Support Network that provides immediate help for families who have lost their providers through death, expulsion or imprisonment.
- Aid to prisoners.
- Kindergarten and nursery schools in the West Bank and Gaza.

The Palestinian people want only the means to build their own futures. During this holiday season, please give generously.

Sincerely,

Ramsey Clark

Ramsey Clark
Former U.S. Attorney General

The Gulf crisis is having a devastating effect on Palestinians living in the Israeli-occupied territories.

More than 800,000 Palestinians worked in the Gulf countries. About half of these people worked in Kuwait. Palestinians have played a major role in building industries, schools, hospitals and other facilities in the Gulf states. Since the Gulf crisis, tens of thousands of Palestinian workers have become unemployed, and have fled, returning to Israel's repressive occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

Not only has Iraq's invasion put an end to the $120 million—the largest source of outside income—that these Palestinians sent home each year, but the governments of the Gulf states have also cut off funds that they formerly sent to support Palestinian professors and staff at all six universities in the occupied territories. Gulf aid for hospitals, schools, charitable and relief organizations, as well as support for the intifadah, have also dried up.

Exports of Palestinian farm products have dwindled with the loss of Kuwait and Iraq as markets. Experts predict that the inability to export Palestinian goods will result in an annual loss of over $100 million to farmers and local industry.

The struggle for dignity and a national future continues.

The intifadah has now entered its fourth year. Palestinians are as determined as ever to win their freedom and shape their own destiny.

The Israeli government's repression of the intifadah has also continued to escalate. Deaths, injuries and collective punishments remain standard practice by the occupying military forces.

But Palestinians persist. They cling to an image of the future which includes dignity, self-determination and cultural pride. They are building a national society. Their efforts are bolstered by the hard work of organizations like Palestine Aid Society.

Palestine Aid Society

Through its twenty chapters throughout the U.S., PAS funds self-help programs in the West Bank and Gaza.

I SUPPORT PALESTINE AID SOCIETY'S 1991 EMERGENCY AID PROGRAM.

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of:

☐ $500 ☐ $300 ☐ $100 ☐ $50 ☐ Other $ _____

☐ Send me more information about Palestine Aid Society.

☐ I wish to join. Enclosed is my $20 annual dues.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Palestine Aid Society, P.O. Box 2724
New York, NY 10008-2724 (212) 385-4233

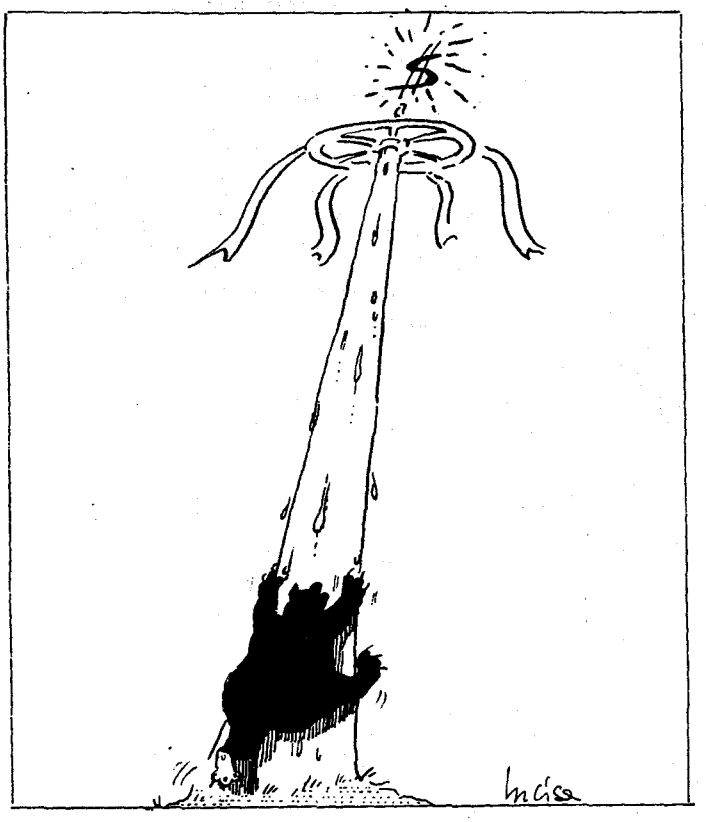
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In 1917, as John Reed noted in *Ten Days That Shook the World*, the Bolsheviks' appeal lay partly in the fact that at a time of crisis, they alone had "a constructive programme." Today, so fully have advocates of the free market captured the intellectual initiative that no one seems capable of advancing an analysis of the economic crisis or a plan for dealing with it within an explicitly socialist framework.

Ironically, the romance of the market arises as much from the successes of Soviet socialism as from its all-too-apparent failures. Karl Marx expected capitalism to give birth to its gravedigger—an exploited, class-conscious proletariat. In fact, socialism has sown its own seeds of discontent by wrenching the U.S.S.R., at tremendous cost, from backwardness to modernity and by creating, almost from nothing, a vast class of professionals, intellectuals and white-collar workers.

These academics, journalists, artists, scientists and managers stand at the cutting edge of demands for economic change. Unlike their counterparts of an earlier generation, who measured in their own lives how far the Soviet Union had traveled from the widespread illiteracy and social misery of czarist days, this generation compares its conditions of life with the contemporary West. Thanks to *glasnost*, thousands of them have traveled abroad for the first time. And coupled with the crisis of the Soviet economy, their encounter with the Western standard of living has been a shattering experience. To remind such persons that not all Americans share in capitalism's bounty is beside the point. They are interested in their own equivalents overseas, not the plight of the poor or the homeless.

This intelligentsia and managerial class—those the Western press calls "radicals" or "democrats"—are the most insistent advocates of far-reaching economic and political change. In the U.S.S.R., these terms carry different meanings than they do in the West. Soviet radicals admire Margaret Thatcher, Milton Friedman and the virtues of unfettered capitalism. Each week *Moscow News*, among the most influential radical journals, contains articles that would comfortably find a home in publications of the Heritage Foundation or the American Enterprise Institute.



One piece blamed America's economic problems on labor unions, whose exorbitant wage demands supposedly rendered some industries, like steel and autos, uncompetitive. Another praised General Pinochet for introducing "overdue" economic changes to Chile. According to *Moscow News*, not only should state-owned enterprises be privatized but public welfare spending should be cut to the bone. "The state budget," one article insisted, "cannot take care of everyone. They must protect themselves by earning what they can and using the new conditions of the market economy."

Soviet democrats are more interested in the structure of government—an independent judiciary and multiparty legislature to act as checks against absolutism—than in a politically engaged citizenry. Indeed, they fear the popular will as an obstacle to economic change, and they are not certain that in a democratic system the radical intelligentsia would, in fact, prevail.

Gavril Popov, the newly elected Mayor of Moscow and a man associated with both free-market reform and political democratization, recently pointed out that these two goals are in some sense mutually contradictory. The "tasks that must be carried out"—that is, the restoration of capitalism—will, Popov wrote in *The New York Review of Books*, produce greater and greater economic inequality. That, in turn, will stimulate political disaffection. Popov's solution was not to cushion the inegalitarian impact of the market economy but to speed up economic change before popular opposition has time to coalesce.

"The masses," wrote Popov, "long for fairness and economic equality." This deeply ingrained popular attitude is perhaps Soviet socialism's most enduring intellectual legacy. It goes hand in hand with suspicion of suddenly acquired wealth, widespread distaste for the naked greed now rampant in black-market and hard-currency dealings, a widespread preference for rationing of scarce goods as opposed to raising prices, and a staunch commitment to maintaining the U.S.S.R.'s fraying but still extensive social "safety net."

American journalists periodically have a field day citing belief in equality and suspicion of entrepreneurship as evidence of the innate backwardness of the "Russian character." To Soviet radicals, those attitudes seem a pernicious legacy of seventy years of Communism. As of today, anti-market sentiments have failed to find organized political expression. But they certainly worry free-market advocates. This past spring both the opposition and the official press were filled with articles criticizing equality as an archaic notion, hopelessly out-of-date in the late twentieth century.

Indeed, a new "crime" has lately been added to the list of Stalin's perfidies: By narrowing wage differentials between the skilled and the unskilled, and between professional and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In this War over Three-Million People Died...

The Spanish Civil War

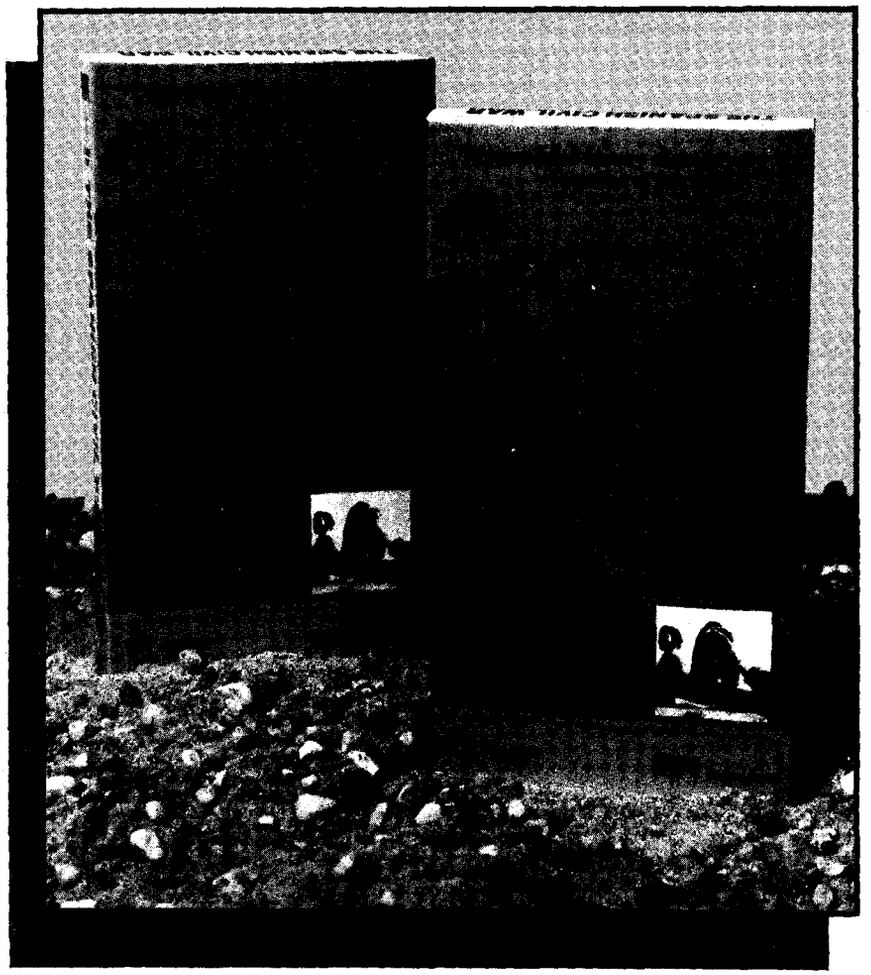
On Video

A Six-hour History of one of the Bloodiest, Complex Wars in History.

On July 17, 1936, the Spanish Republic was shaken as Franco lead other right wing military officers in an attempted coup d'etat. The Spanish Civil War began. It was internationally known as a fight between fascism and democracy. It mobilized the world into action as Americans, Russians, British, and progressive people of all nationalities converged on Spain and fought what was to become the battleground of ideology.

Earnest Hemingway fought as did George Orwell. This war was the training ground for Hitler's war ideas. It was a brutal war as the Nationalists, lead by Franco, rampaged through the Spanish countryside in the name of God, King, or ideology while slaught-ering those with republican values.

This six-hour history is the most comprehensive visual record of this war. With rare archival footage recovered only after Franco's death and interviews with surviving participants, this is a dramatic series produced by award-winning Granada TV.



Included in this history:

Part 1—*Prelude to Tragedy* *1931-1936:* The five turbulent years that lead to the war.

Part 2— *Revolution, Counter-* Revolution, and Terror: Half of the war's victims did not die in battle but actually by murder or mass execution.

Part 3—*Battleground for Idealists:* Volunteers from all over the world arrive including America's Abraham Lincoln Brigade to fight the Nationalists.

Part 4—*Franco and the Nationalists:* The story of Franco, the longest standing dictator of the 20th century takes power.

Part 5—*The Revolution:* The competing factions of the Republic, Anarchists, Communists, and Socialists tear the revolution apart.

Part 6—*Victory and Defeat:* After Franco's victory; fortune, execution, and concentration camps await Republican prisoners.

Purchase this dramatic, collector's edition video series for only $79.98

2434 6 Hours $79.98

24 Hour Toll Free Hotline:

1-800-338-7710, Ext. TN 912

FAX YOUR ORDER TO: 708-532-2224

TO ORDER, please send check, money order or credit card (no cash) to:

ALL PAYMENTS MUST BE IN U.S. DOLLARS

FUSION VIDEO

17214 So. Oak Park Ave.-Dept. TN012-Tinley Park, IL 60477

ALL CASSETTES ARE VHS ONLY.

1-800-338-7710 Inside Illinois 708-532-2050

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

☐ **YES!** Please send me a Free FUSION CATALOG with my order.

☐ I am enclosing $2.95 for a FUSION CATALOG.

CASSETTE NUMBER

2434

Bill my credit card: ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard

Account Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Authorization Signature of Cardholder _____

Video Cassette Total $ _____

Shipping & Handling $4.50* _____

TOTAL Amount $ _____ Illinois residents add 7% sales tax.

*Canadian orders: $8.95 for shipping & handling. *All other Foreign countries: $13.95 for surface mail. Or $23.95 air mail for shipping & handling.

FUSION VIDEO is a division of FUSION INDUSTRIES, INC. TN012

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

manual workers, he promoted the idea of equality. (In fact, Stalin presided over a steady retreat from wage equality, but it is fashionable today to blame him for every conceivable ill of Soviet society, including those for which he bore no responsibility.)

At first glance, the romance of the market seems to rest on an admixture of naïveté and wishful thinking. The current obsession with uncovering the Soviet Union's hidden history coexists with a remarkable historical amnesia, or ignorance, regarding the West. The radicals assume that the Western standard of living has arisen naturally from the functioning of capitalism; they condemn the very union movement and popular struggles that helped create today's high income levels and mass-consumption societies.

In language reminiscent of our own "end of ideology" theorists of the 1950s, Soviet radicals insist that ideology itself has been discredited, that politics ought to be guided by "common sense," without considering that the idea of the free market is itself ideological. They call for a pragmatic approach to politics, an end to social experiments, and in the same breath propose a transformation of Soviet society every bit as utopian as the original revolution. They have no sense of capitalism and the market as global systems within which, to put it mildly, standards of living vary enormously, and in which the exploitation of Guatemalan peasants or Mexican migrant laborers has something to do with the abundance of fruits and vegetables in American supermarkets.

Yet the widespread appeal of market ideology cannot be attributed simply to self-deception or tunnel vision. Writing about the eighteenth century, the historian Franco Venturi called equality a "protest ideal." It was less a blueprint for change than a criticism of existing society. The market plays the same role in today's Soviet Union.

Despite their belief in equality and their fear of the price increases, unemployment and social dislocation certain to follow in the wake of radical economic reforms, many ordinary Russians find themselves attracted to the idea of the free market. This is not only because it promises a cornucopia of consumer goods (or at least basic items from socks, aspirin and snowsuits to condoms, all of which had disappeared from the shelves by the time we arrived in Moscow). In listening to Russians fascinated with the market's magical qualities, I felt as if I were being transported back to debates at the dawn of modern capitalism.

More than a decade ago, in writing a book about Thomas Paine, I was puzzled by his enthusiastic embrace of the laissez-faire ideology of Adam Smith. Only gradually did I come to understand the profoundly liberating implications of market ideology in the eighteenth century. Opposition to government control of the economy dovetailed with hostility to powerful institutions resting on inherited privilege: the established church, closed corporations, a hereditary monarchy and aristocracy. To men like Paine, the free market was a democratic innovation in a society in which status rested not on individual merit but on one's place in a complex web of privilege and patronage.

In today's U.S.S.R., it is not simply the ubiquitous shortages but how people do manage to obtain things that feeds discontent. In a world of empty stores, shopping is commonly done through the back door—that is, via bribes, barter and official or family connections. Even those in a position to benefit from this system find it unfair and humiliating. To a large extent, whom you know now determines your standard of living. There is something positively egalitarian about the way money in a market society can erase other social distinctions, about a world in which anybody with the cash can walk into a store and purchase whatever goods he or she pleases, without incurring personal obligations.

Thus popular opinion in the Soviet Union appears poised between fear of the inequalities of a market society and resentment over the inequities daily encountered in the burdensome task of putting a meal on the table. In this situation, it seems unlikely that a coherent alternative to the free-market agenda will develop any time soon. □

JOBLESS-INSURANCE CUTS

Out of Work? Out of Luck

KEITH BROOKS AND MANNY NESS

Communications specialist John Eng, 45, has lost two jobs in three years. I.T.T. sold his division to another company, and despite thirteen years' seniority he was laid off; he held his next job for eighteen months before the company moved his department to Canada. In 1976, Eng could have collected up to sixty-five weeks of unemployment benefits. Under the current system he got only twenty-six weeks, the maximum allowable: $245 a week, or about half his previous take-home pay. Those benefits are now considered taxable income. Eng finds himself in a labor market with little use for his specialized skills and will likely have to take a significant pay cut to support his family of six.

Susan Marino applied for unemployment after losing her cashier's job. Her former employer hired a legal consultant and succeeded in challenging her claim for unemployment benefits. As a single mother Marino is in a position she never thought possible, with no choice but to apply for welfare.

Eng and Marino are among some 7 million workers officially counted as unemployed out of a work force of almost 118 million. Marino became one of the millions of jobless people ineligible to collect unemployment benefits; Eng joins more than 2 million who have exhausted all benefits for the fiscal year ending June 1990. It is no longer a debate for them as to whether the United States is in a recession.

Keith Brooks and Manny Ness have recently helped initiate a grass-roots campaign to reform the unemployment benefits system. Brooks is a founder of the National Unemployed Network; Ness has been active in a number of unions.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But even if this is not the first tilt toward the crash some believe is inevitable within the next decade, unemployment is growing, and the safety net for the jobless—the unemployment insurance system (U.I.S.)—is full of holes.

The current downturn is hitting a cross section of American workers. The financial services sector, on which much of the celebrated Reagan recovery was built, has lost more than 50,000 jobs on Wall Street alone. State and local governments facing fiscal crisis have announced civil service layoffs, hitting black and other minority workers particularly hard. Almost 150,000 construction and factory jobs were lost in October alone. Manufacturing is at its lowest point since the 1982 recession, and more layoffs are coming in auto and other basic industries.

According to a recent Bureau of Labor Statistics survey, employment fell by 187,000 jobs in October; unexpectedly, an average of 431,000 new unemployment claims were filed during each week that month, and for the week ending November 10 the figure was 488,000, the highest such filing in seven years. Nationally the unemployment rate is 5.7 percent, with a depression-level 11.8 percent among blacks and 8.1 percent among Latinos.

And those figures underplay the real unemployment problem, according to Markley Roberts of the A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s research department: "A more accurate picture would include the underemployed 5.5 million involuntary part-time workers, the more than 800,000 discouraged workers who stopped looking for work in the past six months and those who have completely left the work force." If those workers were included, the A.F.L.-C.I.O. estimates, the October unemployment rate would almost double, to 10.6 percent.

And what can the unemployed expect in the way of minimal protection? When they qualify for unemployment at all, Americans out of work have fewer weeks of benefits, at a lower percentage of their regular wages in many states, than at any time in almost twenty years. Back in 1986 a federal administrator of the unemployment insurance system, Murray Rubin (since deceased), explained that "U.I.S. no longer meets the needs of a large majority of the unemployed. 1980-86 constitutes the most regressive . . . period in the history of the U.I.S. from the standpoint of cutbacks in benefit adequacy and benefit availability."

Little has changed since then. Anticipating the current slump, Representatives Thomas Downey of New York, Sander Levin of Michigan and Donald Pease of Ohio introduced the Unemployment Compensation Reform Act last January. "It is vital that we reform the unemployment compensation system," Downey said. "[It is] woefully unprepared for the next recession. Benefits are inadequate, administrative funding too restrictive, and unemployment taxes are insufficient to cover costs." But the bill was killed last summer.

It is tempting to blame Ronald Reagan alone for the dismemberment of the unemployment insurance system, and indeed he went at it with a vengeance. But like so many other Reagan policies, it had its antecedent in the administration of the liberal Jimmy Carter. With the economy recovering from the 1974-76 recession, Carter reduced the sixty-five-week maximum to thirty-nine weeks by allowing two extended benefit programs to expire, which were financed on a 50-50 basis by federal and state governments.

Under Reagan, while national unemployment officially climbed past 10 percent and long-term unemployment grew, state after state was disqualified from the sole remaining extended benefit program as a result of stiffer eligibility requirements. At this time not a single state qualifies for the program despite $7 billion in the federal account specifically earmarked for that purpose. The effect has been to knock thirteen more weeks off the maximum benefit payment.

In addition to the dramatic drop in the number of weeks available, the percentage of unemployed collecting benefits fell from more than 70 percent in 1975 to about 33 percent now. The Labor Department attributes this to tighter federal and state standards, which caused more benefit denials and disqualifications, but the department also notes that the numbers reflect the inability of the system to care for the long-term unemployed, who are counted among the jobless but do not receive benefits. In addition, the department points to the changing nature of the work force. An increasing number of jobs are in the nonunion service sector; without the protection of unions such workers are less likely to know about benefits and their claims are more likely to be contested by employers. So two facts stand out as the legacy of the Carter-Reagan era: a scant twenty-six weeks of benefits and only about 33 percent of the unemployed who are collecting those benefits.

If Carter helped set the agenda for gutting the unemployment insurance system, Reagan deserves his own particularly bitter place in history for reducing extended benefits in 1982, just as the nation plunged into the worst downturn since the Great Depression. "From 1937 to 1977 there was a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

strong trend toward longer maximum potential durations of benefits," says Urban Institute senior research associate Wayne Vroman. "What was unusual about the 1980s is that benefit availability was deliberately reduced . . . while the economy was in recession." As part of Reagan's overall agenda to discipline labor, the unemployed were forced to accept any job available, usually at considerably lower wages.

But the attack was not just at the federal level. In Pennsylvania, the government increased the minimum earnings and the amount of weeks worked needed to qualify for unemployment benefits, notes John Dodds, director of the Philadelphia Unemployment Project and former coordinator of the National Unemployed Network. In fact, between 1980 and 1986 thirty-one states increased the number of weeks and amount of earnings required to collect unemployment benefits, twenty states changed formulas used to compute weekly unemployment benefits to yield a lower amount and most states set stricter guidelines for qualification.

As a result of relatively low payouts over the past few years, some states have accumulated large unemployment reserves. In New York, for instance, there is a very healthy $2.7 billion in the fund. Such states could use these funds, financed by taxes on employers, to extend benefits. Still, state moneys alone, however formidable, are hardly sufficient. Representative Downey warns that unless the wage base for the federal unemployment tax is raised now, there will be more trouble as times get worse. Even with a total of $38.9 billion in all state funds, it is predicted that if unemployment claims continue at the current pace, hard-hit states like Connecticut and Michigan could exhaust their funds in the first quarter of 1991 and have to borrow from the federal government. Sar Levitan, director of the Center for Social Policy Studies at George Washington University, recommends that just as the Social Security tax wage base has been raised over the years from $3,000 to more than $50,000 to meet changing needs, so too should the base for the unemployment system be raised. The latter has risen only from $3,000 to $7,000.

If the unemployed are to receive the minimal protections available before the system was gutted, the federal government has to relax eligibility requirements and increase the maximum weeks by restoring extended benefits. But even with more weeks and easier access, few can survive financially on the income provided by unemployment insurance, which is also set by state governments. In New York it currently averages a poverty-level $178 a week; nationally it averaged $159. Safeguards against evictions, foreclosures, repossessions and utility turnoffs, as well as provisions for health care, are also necessary. And there is a need for retraining on a broad scale. Moreover, there is not even enough federal money budgeted for the day-to-day operations of the unemployment system. Simply for administering the current level of services there is a shortfall, conservatively estimated at $83 million, according to Cheryl Templeman, director of unemployment insurance for the Interstate Conference of Employment Security Agencies.

It is clear that the same Bush Administration that opposed Downey's bill will not act without public pressure. Just as the unemployment insurance system itself was established in response to millions demanding jobs or income during the early 1930s, so every expansion or positive alteration of coverage has resulted in part from public expressions of discontent. In the early 1980s dozens of unemployment organizations sprang up throughout the country, many of them forming the National Unemployed Network. Organizing at unemployment centers, in communities and in unions, they successfully fought for Federal Supplemental Compensation, an emergency extension to replace the extended benefits program. Their protests and lobbying won mortgage assistance programs in Pennsylvania, stopped utility turnoffs and gained greater access to health care in Ohio and Illinois, and secured state funding for a thirteen-week period extended benefit program in Maryland. In that last case a campaign for an Unemployed Bill of Rights got widespread support from the A.F.L.-C.I.O., the Urban League, religious alliances and others. There is little doubt that the system would have been weakened even further without the resistance organized by these groups.

Right now a coalition of the unemployed, labor, civil rights, religious and community groups, along with the elected officials of our cities, should press Washington to implement sorely needed reforms. And central to this fight—in defense of the living standard of the unemployed and in the demand for jobs—must be the unions. Any agenda for a revitalized labor movement cannot avoid addressing these issues.

Unions take a beating during times of high unemployment, as layoffs reduce dues-paying membership while the swelling ranks of the unemployed undermine labor's bargaining power. Simply out of self-interest, unions have to broaden their scope of activity. With union membership declining, the last thing labor needs is the narrow business-unionist outlook that, at best, extends responsibility only to the workers on the job.

Like workers everywhere, the unemployed need to be organized and brought to life as a political force. Traditionally, the A.F.L.-C.I.O. has restricted its activity on their behalf to legislative lobbying for improved benefits. With few exceptions, creative leadership and initiative in the early 1980s came from the unemployed and union activists who formed organizations open to union and nonunion, employed and unemployed workers. Too often their efforts met with initial indifference from union officials, and in some cases outright opposition. While this attitude was to change, Barney Oursler, coordinator of the Mon Valley Unemployed Committee in Pennsylvania, makes clear, "It was up to us to mobilize people. The union leadership would usually support us, but either they did not know how, or were afraid of mobilizing the membership."

Although many organizations are now inactive, the Philadelphia Unemployment Project is currently doing health care outreach at unemployment centers, and the Mon Valley group is fighting to remove the liens that were placed on people's homes in the early 1980s as a condition of receiving welfare. They and others are preparing for the next wave of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If you missed him on MacNeil/Lehrer, don't miss him again.

Twice this fall, Erwin Knoll, the Editor of *The Progressive* magazine, has appeared on the MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour to give rare—and eloquent—pleas for sanity in the Persian Gulf. Alone among the editors on the panels, Knoll has denounced George Bush's belligerent actions and appealed to Americans to resist Washington's warmaking plans.

Now you, too, can share Erwin Knoll's gutsy and thoughtful analysis of the unfolding Persian Gulf crisis. Subscribe to *The Progressive* for $18 a year (50% off the newsstand price!) and we'll send you a ***free*** copy of Erwin Knoll's latest editorial on the Gulf crisis.

Half Price!

Send me a subscription to *The Progressive* for only $18. ***That's 50% off*** the newsstand price. As an extra bonus, send me ***free*** Erwin Knoll's latest editorial on the Gulf crisis.

Name (please print)

Address, Apt.

City

State, Zip

☐ My payment is enclosed.

☐ Charge my ☐ *MasterCard* ☐ *Visa.*

Credit Card Acct. No. Exp. Date

Cardholder's Signature

Complete this form and mail it to:

the Progressive

409 East Main Street, Madison, WI 53703

A5NNMM

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

joblessness; a campaign has already been launched to extend unemployment benefits.

At a time when Washington has found billions to send troops to the Middle East and to bail out the savings and loan institutions, the matter of unemployment insurance is less about finances than about priorities. (Ironically, those same soldiers will qualify for only thirteen weeks of unemployment benefits when they leave the service.) It was during the worst economic years in this country's history that the now-tattered safety net was put in place. The protection of the unemployed is a political, not only an economic, issue.

We are entering the fourth recession in the past fifteen years. Fundamentally at issue is society's ability to provide decent-paying and secure jobs to all who are able to work. New approaches toward job security ought to be explored, including the shorter workweek and a more active government role in providing employment. But right now the immediate question is whether society can afford not to protect the coming wave of the unemployed. The millions of homeless are evidence of the adverse consequences to people left without adequate protections; the rising numbers of the poor—both working and unemployed—are a reminder of this country's unfulfilled promise. Adding another layer to the dispossessed could be social dynamite. □

NATION/I.F. STONE AWARD

A Mini-Bhopal In Galesburg

We are pleased to announce that the winner of the first annual Nation *Magazine/I.F. Stone Award for Student Journalism is Dave Newbart, whose article, excerpted below, first appeared in the Galesburg (Illinois)* Zephyr, *an alternative paper to which Knox College students and faculty contribute. (Todd Moore, editor of the* Zephyr, *assisted in the final version.) The award, which carries a prize of $500, is open to all undergraduate students enrolled in a U.S. college (the deadline for next year's award is June 29). In judging the competition,* The Nation*'s editorial staff considered nearly 200 entries submitted by the writers or nominated by editors of student publications or by faculty members.*

We suspect that I.F. Stone would have approved of our choice. Newbart's article exemplifies the kind of investigative reporting, progressive politics and exposure of injustice that Izzy made his beat. As a reporter/editor for PM, The Nation *and his own renowned weekly, Izzy specialized in excavating concealed, covered-up or overlooked facts. Newbart's timely investigation of a toxic-chemical spill inside the Admiral Company's plant in Galesburg exposed corporate wrongdoing and even thwarted a cover-up.*

Recently, we were reminded that one of Izzy's perennial targets was the Central Intelligence Agency, Washington's longest-running institutional cover-up. Through a Freedom of Information Act request, we have learned that the C.I.A. has an I.F. Stone file—a small scoop in itself, since the agency is barred by law from domestic intelligence gathering. Not surprisingly, the bulk of the file comprises an anthology of Izzy's articles on the C.I.A. over the years. There are also a few memos and documents revealing that the agency disapproved of Izzy as much as he disapproved of it. Although we deplore the C.I.A. practice of keeping files on journalists, we can only wish that more reporters would engage in the kind of tough scrutiny of the agency that earned Izzy his file. Getting your name in the Langley archives should be considered an honor on a par with a Pulitzer—or even a Nation *Magazine/I.F. Stone Award.* —*The Editors*

DAVE NEWBART

In the early morning hours of December 4, 1989, a foaming machine at the Admiral Manufacturing Corporation plant in Galesburg, Illinois, automatically kicked on, as it does at ten minutes before every hour. The machine held the ingredients for the foam that would be used to insulate the refrigerators to be manufactured later in the day. However, excess pressure caused a pipe connection to rupture. The pipe contained MDI, variously defined as diphenylmethane diisocyanate or methylene bisphenyl isocyanate.

MDI is one of a family of industrial chemicals used in the manufacture of paint, insulation and plastics. At Admiral, MDI is mixed with polyurethane and used in foam insulation. A chemical cousin of MDI—methyl isocyanate—was responsible for the death of thousands of people living downwind of the Union Carbide plant in Bhopal, India, in 1984.

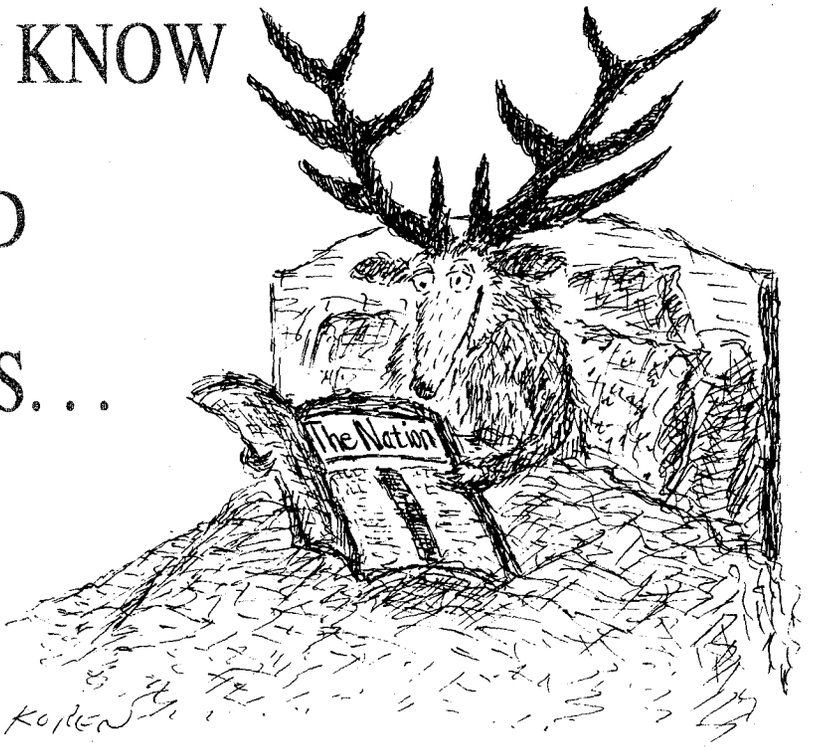
At 1:30 that December morning an alarm notified the graveyard shift that the MDI line had blown—but not before more than half of a 300-gallon tank of MDI had spewed its contents all over the floor. The pumps in the foaming machine reportedly can reach pressures of up to 1,500 pounds per square inch. As one employee said, "It was spitting out fast."

By the time the valve had been turned off, between 150 and 200 gallons of MDI had soaked the area around the foaming line. Equipped with rubber gloves, oxygen packs, a load of oil-dry and two shop vacuums, four maintenance workers proceeded to clean up the mess. According to standards set by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), their equipment should have also included "moon suits," impermeable coveralls that minimize exposure to the chemical. "But we don't have any protective clothing out there," maintains one employee who was familiar with the cleanup procedure.

This cleanup team was by no means the "emergency response team" required by OSHA to handle such a spill. They had no formal training in containing hazardous waste, although they had a lot of previous practice. Admiral is no stranger to accidental isocyanate releases, according to employees. At 3:30 A.M. they were still hard at work covering

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT YOU'LL FIND BETWEEN THE COVERS. . .



BUT IT'S SURE TO BE EYE OPENING.

ENDEAR YOURSELF TO SOMEONE, GIVE THE NATION!

SPECIAL LOW HOLIDAY GIFT RATES!

$27
for the first 1 year gift (47 issues)

We'll get your gift subscriptions off to a festive start with a special gift announcement.

YOUR NAME _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

❑ Send gift cards to recipients

Signed _____

❑ Send gift cards to me in time for holiday giving.

For each gift outside the U.S. add $14 postage.
Payment in U.S. funds only.

For additional gifts attach list.

❑ Enclosed is $ _____ for _____ subscription(s).

Charge my ❑ MASTERCARD ❑ VISA

Account # _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

❑ Bill me later.

SEND TO:

The Nation.

PO BOX 10793, DES MOINES, IA 50340-0793.

$22
for each additional gift
(50% off the regular subscription price).

PLEASE SEND GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS TO:

NAME _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

GIFT TO:

NAME _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

GIFT TO:

NAME _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

GIFT TO:

NAME _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

XG0M41

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the spill outside the machine with oil-dry. They had to wait for the material to absorb the MDI before they could remove it. The remaining isocyanate that had pooled beneath the machinery presented a bigger problem, however. Some fifty gallons of liquid MDI had to be sucked directly into the vacuum cleaners.

Dorothy Tank, an assembler from Kewanee, arrived at work at 5:30 A.M., as she did every day. "I was in there early," she said. "Sam Wrigley [Admiral's safety and security manager] was out there. I saw all the stuff on the floor. He saw me but he didn't say anything to me. . . . I didn't pay much attention because I thought it was oil."

She shrugged it off and sat down on a stool seventy-five feet from the spill, where she drank tea and did needlework. At 5:45 she punched in and noticed another large pool of fluid in the main aisle that employees would have to walk down when they came to punch in. Tank's eyes and nose began to burn and her chest was hurting, but she didn't know the reason for her discomfort. It was an hour later when a steward for Admiral's production union, Local 2063 of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, told her that the plant was being evacuated. Only then did she learn that the dark brown, syrupy substance was extremely hazardous to her health.

During that hour, hundreds of employees started filing in for the first shift. By 7 A.M. almost the entire daytime work force had entered the plant. Approximately 100 of those employees were in departments 214, 220 and 225, the sectors closest to the foaming machine. Those employees were exposed to the MDI spill.

Several employees confirmed that the plant management officials on hand, including Wrigley and foreman Tom Smith, made no effort to keep the employees away from the spill and didn't inform them of any danger. "When the people were cleaning up the chemical spill there were people standing around watching them," said Mike Norville, chair of the union local's safety committee.

At 6:45, the steward phoned Local 2063 president Don LeFebvre, who advised workers to clear the immediate area. The steward initiated the evacuation, moving everyone toward the front entrance. Other employees, separated from the spill by only a few feet, took the hint and followed. LeFebvre notified OSHA and called Jim Kirwan, Admiral's vice president for manufacturing, who until then had not heard about the accident.

Even some employees who had worked all night didn't learn about the spill for some time after it happened, extending their exposure period to hours. One janitor, who had arrived at 2:30 A.M., said she didn't learn of the hazard until six hours later.

Norville, who arrived at 7 A.M. to see hundreds of workers waiting in limbo, said Admiral management was encouraging employees to go back to work before the chemical had been completely contained and neutralized. "I had to go down and inspect it about 7:30," Norville said. "The cleanup was still in progress. They thought they had it cleaned up but it wasn't. There was still liquid MDI on the floor. They tried to get the people to work with just the oil-dry on top of it. But [the oil-dry] doesn't do anything."

The air was first monitored at 8:30, allegedly recording safe results. Admiral has no record of this, however, because the monitoring instrument's tape readouts weren't functioning. They had no record of the air samples taken. "OSHA asked to see their tapes," Norville said. "Admiral said it didn't work." OSHA later cited the company for waiting so long to check employee exposure levels. Before 8:30, he added, "they did no monitoring, no checking of what the fumes were. Nobody knew how bad it was."

The worthiness of the monitoring devices that were used is also questionable. One employee familiar with them said, "The monitors—I don't think they work too good. One time there was two buckets of MDI sitting right underneath it and it didn't monitor anything."

Several employees remarked that they could smell the chemical when they arrived, Norville said. According to OSHA guidelines, when a person can smell the fumes given off by MDI—normally an odorless chemical—he or she has already been exposed to at least ten times the level considered hazardous.

It wasn't until after 9 A.M. that management and union officials said it was safe to go back to work. The rank and file, who balked at the offer, were given the option of not returning. Most left. Because only a handful went back inside, first-shift production was severely limited.

According to a letter to employees from Admiral vice president Kirwan, "Maintenance was called and proper cleanup procedures were followed to contain and remove the MDI. This was accomplished by approximately 6 am." This letter was dated December 7, two days after the spill. But according to a press release issued by Jon Nicholas, Admiral's vice president of human resources, "clean-up operations were still not complete when first shift employees began arriving for their 7:00 a.m. shift." This release was dated December 4, the day of the accident.

OSHA inspector Kim Stille didn't arrive from Peoria until that afternoon. By then, the toxic isocyanate had begun to take its toll.

There are three machines that foam-insulate the refrigerators made at Admiral. Two of them were installed in January 1989. The machine that leaked was approximately 100 yards in length and could foam ten refrigerator cabinets at a time. In the old days of the Admiral operation, refrigerators were fitted with less toxic insulation. But in the mid-1970s TDI—toluene diisocyanate—became part of the industry standard for foam insulation. Admiral has a history of isocyanate leaks and spills dating back to that time.

Admiral switched from TDI to MDI, hoping it would lead to "increased safety for employees," according to Kirwan's letter to his workers. MDI doesn't evaporate into the air as quickly as TDI, thus lessening the amount of potentially dangerous vapor released. In the December 7 issue of the "Safe-Times," an in-house publication of the Admiral plant, MDI is described as "a relatively new and safe chemical. . . . According to safety standards set by the government, MDI causes only minor allergic reactions with direct contact in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

some people. The toxicity level, even if taken orally, is low."

At odds with this optimistic appraisal were the comments of an OSHA industrial hygienist who wished to remain anonymous: "MDI? That's a lot like the stuff that was released at Bhopal. All isocyanates are hazardous as far as I'm concerned. One hundred and fifty gallons were spilled? Oh, Jesus. It's important that people have absolutely no contact with the stuff. All isocyanates are essentially the same, in terms of their toxicity. They can cause damage. To clean up a spill that size would require full protection, no bodily contact. And no contact with the liquid. You wouldn't want to take that stuff home. That's just incredible."

According to a report on the toxicity of MDI issued by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Labor, exposure to the chemical has the following results:

> **Short term exposure:** Exposure to methylene bisphenyl isocyanate may make a person allergic to it and produce wheezing, shortness of breath, and coughing. It may also cause irritation of the eyes and lungs, upset stomach, vomiting, possibly fever, stuffiness of the nose, sore throat, a feeling of tightness in the chest. . . . Such symptoms may be delayed up to eight hours after the person has been exposed.
>
> **Long term exposure:** A person may become increasingly sensitive or allergic to methylene bisphenyl isocyanate. Chronic exposure to it may lead to permanent breathing or chest problems. Repeated or prolonged exposure of the skin to methylene bisphenyl isocyanate may cause a skin rash.
>
> Methylene bisphenyl isocyanate vapor is a potent respiratory sensitizer. It also is a strong irritant of the eyes, mucus membranes and skin.

None of that swayed Jim Kirwan. In an interview he said, "Is MDI hazardous? There are six sides to that question and I'm only one of them. There's a lot of discussion going on, a lot of misinformation. Do you know what hazardous is? It's something that's dangerous for people to be around. Water is hazardous, did you know that? Would you drink water if it was heated to 212 degrees? Of course you wouldn't. According to the information I have, you can drink this stuff [MDI]. Would I drink it? No. But according to the specifications on the drum, if you drank it, it wouldn't hurt you."

At the end of the conversation he added, "And if you quote me on any of this I'll deny I ever said anything."

According to the federal toxicity study:

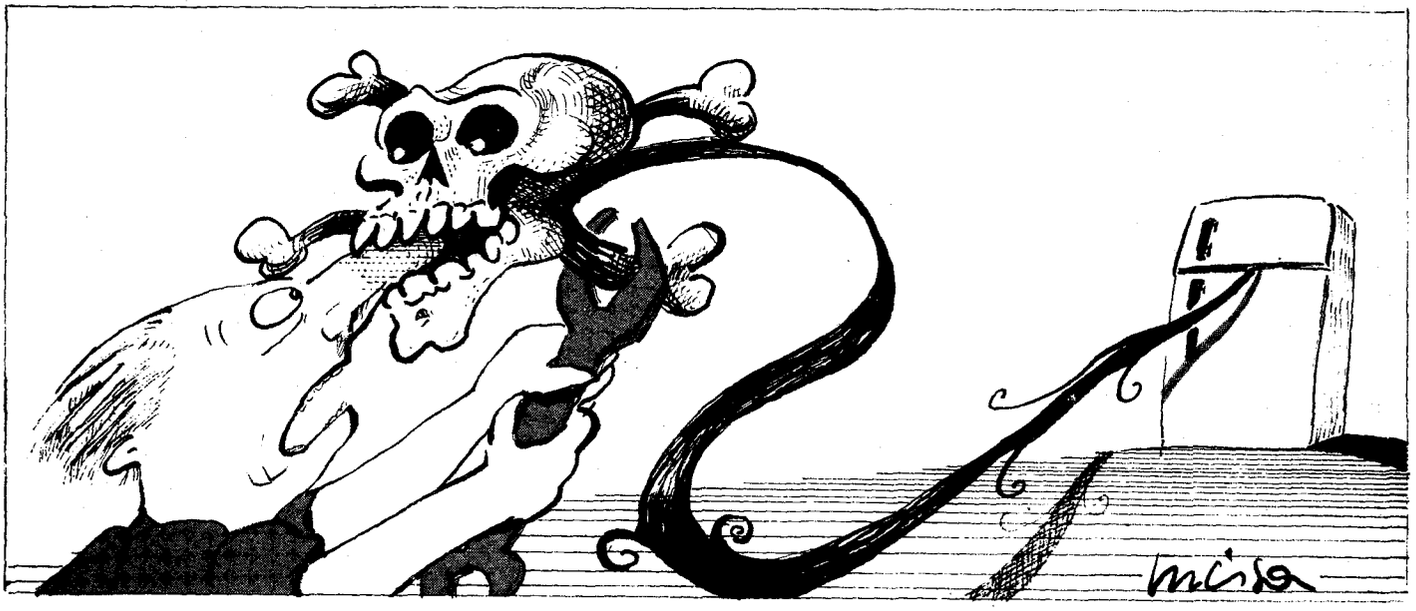
> When MDI or liquids containing MDI have been swallowed and the person is conscious, give the person large quantities of water immediately. After the water has been swallowed, try to get the person to vomit by having him touch the back of his throat with his finger. Do not make an unconscious person vomit. Get medical attention immediately.

Over the past few years, health problems among Admiral plant workers have skyrocketed. Ambulance calls to Admiral have increased from an average of one a month to eight a month in the first two months of 1990. In November 1989, ambulances made eight trips to Admiral. In December 1989, they went there twelve times. The most common complaint? Chest pains, a symptom of possible allergic reaction to isocyanates.

"This is a major problem," Norville said. "I've had more complaints and more problems with this new foam." Since the spill, the number of workers who have reported problems to his health committee has been "in the hundreds." Referring to the accident, Norville says, "There were pregnant women and people with heart conditions exposed that day. The company's got a stack of medical records this high and they say *we've* got to prove it."

Local doctors have reported large increases in the number of patients being treated for respiratory infections, eye irritations, skin rashes, nasal sores, head congestion, wheezing, runny noses, coughing, chest pains and even mental disorders. These are all symptoms common to isocyanate allergies. Of the many Admiral employees contacted, every one of them reported some type of ailment that they believe is related to chemical exposure.

Doctors say the most disturbing factor in all these incidents is that once you've become allergic to isocyanates your system becomes more vulnerable to many other chemicals, including hair spray, paints, insect repellent, even the residual chemical compounds in newspaper ink. Once ex-



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

posed and sensitized, your immune system falters and your lungs begin to deteriorate at an accelerated pace.

Galesburg pulmonologist Dr. John Chiulli is extremely concerned about the effects that MDI and other isocyanates are having on Admiral's work force. While he reports having treated an average of one employee a week since he came to Galesburg more than two years ago, he has seen "a definite increase" in patients since the December spill. Chiulli says he's seen between fifty and sixty Admiral workers.

"There is a problem," he said. "It's a well-known, documented fact. . . . I have had life-threatening symptoms [in my patients] and have told my patients not to go back to work or you will die." The people he is examining are not all chronically ill or heavy smokers. But they do have problems.

Chiulli has made several attempts to inform Admiral management, all without success: "I have sent multiple documents [on MDI's toxicity] to the administration. My thoughts were to get the administration involved. I haven't received much of a response from the administration. . . . From my side it has not been an 'us versus them' mentality. I can't say the same for their side."

Discussing the problems at Admiral, he said, "The kinds of controls that the government expects are not that good. The problem is you can't screen for it. . . . Ten years later you can develop symptoms of asthma as a result of exposure to this. Once you are exposed you really can't do anything but leave the job. It's a very complex situation."

But concern over safe working conditions is nothing new to seasoned Admiral employees. One employee who worked in the lead paint room for twenty years said, "I never smoked in my life. My lungs look like I've been a smoker all my life." Because of his breathing problems he now drives a forklift, but he passes the foaming machines about forty times a day. "I get around that other stuff [MDI] and I really get short of breath," he said. Last year his heart stopped beating while he was at work. "I died once out there. I should have been dead, but they brought me back. Dr. Chiulli told me I shouldn't be in there, but like I told him, I couldn't get out of Admiral. I don't have any money." He got a standard response from the management: "I went to Wrigley [and] asked for compensation. He said, 'Go ahead and prove it.'"

Said another employee who works near the foaming machines, "I started having my problems when they changed to MDI. I didn't feel good for a year before I put two and two together. I started getting a sore throat. Nobody could figure out what was wrong with me. I was dizzy, lightheaded, couldn't remember what was going on. The bad part is, you can't smell MDI if it's around you. You could immediately smell TDI. You could be working around it [MDI] and it could get pretty bad 'cause you can't smell it." He says he tends to look at the world differently after several years at Admiral: "We figure we're cutting eight or ten years off our lives. We wouldn't be surprised if we are."

Two employees have alleged that management at Admiral goes so far as to black out or remove hazardous warning labels from the cans and barrels of the industrial chemicals they use. "I've never seen a TDI barrel that didn't have a blackout," said one woman.

Admiral's reaction? Other than Kirwan's remarks, the company has stonewalled any questions. Jon Nicholas, vice president of human resources, is the designated spokesperson for the company. In an interview this past March, he responded to these questions:

Zephyr: Mr. Nicholas, we've got some questions for you concerning worker safety at Admiral, especially the MDI spill that occurred on December 4.

Jon Nicholas: I don't think we'll have any comment on that.

Z: Would it be possible to tour the plant?

JN: No comment.

Z: Maybe then you can tell us at which time the cleanup of the spill was finally completed. Was it 6 A.M.? 7 A.M.? 9 A.M.?

JN: I'm not sure I can answer that.

Z: Can you tell me if Admiral management stopped the Galesburg Fire Department at the gate?

JN: I don't know.

Z: Are you aware that OSHA standards require that people cleaning up a spill of that size wear a moon suit and full respirator?

JN: I'm not that familiar with OSHA.

Z: Well, then maybe you can tell me what sort of air monitoring devices you have out there? Are people trained to use them?

JN: Well, you seem to know more about this than I do. Maybe we should know something about that.

Z: Can you tell me if management is directing someone to black out labels on containers of hazardous chemicals? We have some pictures here —

JN: Well, you can do anything with pictures you know. . . . Listen . . . you can keep asking these questions and make us look pretty stupid.

Z: That's true. Do I get the impression you're not going to answer any of these questions?

JN: I'm afraid I have no comment on that.

OSHA had plenty to say about the MDI spill. According to a nine-page "Citation and Notification of Penalty," dated March 7, 1990, Admiral was fined a total of $2,430. Said Mike Norville, "They'll do like they always do. They'll pay it. The next time it happens, they'll pay it again."

Afterword

On March 30, the Cincinnati office of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (Niosh) conducted on-site testing and interviews, almost four months after the spill. In a report dated June 15, the agency said it had found no evidence of MDI in the air. Employees reported that doors and windows that hadn't been opened in years were wide open during the tests. The report concluded that management policy and employee attitudes "appeared to be extremely casual given the potential for severe allergic reactions." A Niosh medical officer said, "There definitely are problems at Admiral. We found things that were not good practice." The agency plans to return to Admiral for further testing. In August, the company settled with OSHA, paying a total of only $720 in fines.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Immediately after the publication of the *Zephyr* article, Admiral's safety manager, Sam Wrigley, was fired. Mike Norville feels Wrigley's replacement has made improvements. Norville praised the creation of an emergency task force to handle future spills and said the company is now more open in discussing the use of MDI and worker safety. "They've definitely made some improvements, but they've still got a long way to go," he said. "Before the article, we weren't even up to bat. Now at least we're on base." □

EDITORIALS.

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

entire world organization. What needs to be decided in every instance is what constitutes "working" and how long a period is deemed acceptable. In South Africa international sanctions provided necessary context and specific impetus for historic concessions by the white rulers. But as Brian Urquhart, U.N. political under secretary for eighteen years, points out: "There have never been sanctions of this complexity or this comprehensive. And Iraq is uniquely vulnerable to sanctions. It has a single economic base and a poor industrial infrastructure."

Sanctions rarely, if ever, bring unconditional surrender. That requires overwhelming military devastation, the extermination of civilian populations and the reduction of a nation's economic life to rubble. To bring Iraq to its knees, the United States will have to exceed by several degrees the level of annihilation reached in three years of war in Korea and a dozen years in Indochina. A nuclear bomb or two or three would do the trick nicely.

Why should unconditional surrender be the goal of U.S. policy in the gulf? Sanctions have a much better chance of forcing Iraqi concessions in a shorter time and with much less misery than war. But Bush is running out of "patience" after four months. What that means is that he is finished with the foreplay and wants to get on with the action. If his talk-show surrogates Defense Secretary Cheney and Vice President Quayle are to be believed, Bush has already decided that Saddam Hussein and independent Iraqi power have to be stopped sooner or later, and it had better be sooner. If that's true, Baker's mission to Baghdad is intended solely to deliver an ultimatum for surrender, not to open a dialogue for peace.

No conceivable interest of the United States would be served by aborting the sanctions process and seeding an invasion in its place. Saddam has shown every intention of modulating his most offensive policies—holding hostages, starving the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait, pillaging his conquered territory—while there is the possibility of discussion with the United States. There's every reason to believe that with sanctions in force and talks in progress, most if not all of the U.N.'s August demands can be met without the catastrophe of war. In the meantime, U.S. ground forces can be steadily reduced. Enough firepower would remain in naval and air units to keep the sanctions "working." That's all that's needed, if the revocation of Iraq's claim to Kuwait and containment of further aggression are really the aims of the military presence in the gulf. The rest is overkill.

If there were a way to substitute a true U.N. command for what no one doubts is a unilateral U.S. effort in the gulf, it would be so much the better. But the demise of the cold war and the decline of much of the Third World's economy have made the U.N. a sitting duck for U.S. manipulation. We should do all we can to strengthen the U.N. as an instrument for the peaceful settlement of world disputes, but let us not delude ourselves: The old socialist bloc is irrevocably broken, and the ever-promising nonaligned group is practically nonfunctional now that there's only one world power. France and Britain are toothless has-beens, and Germany and Japan are effectively removed from power in U.N. circles because of their exclusion from permanent membership on the Security Council.

Gorbachev probably exercised a restraining influence, but when it came to a vote Baker bought the Russians for an estimated $4 billion in aid from the sheiks. He bribed Egypt's Mubarak with $14 billion in forgiven debts. Syria's Assad, whose own brand of Baathist fascism is no second to Saddam's, got $1 billion in arms aid and a go-ahead to wipe out all opposition to its puppet control of Beirut—by massacre, Assad's favorite tactic, where necessary. Turkey was promised 8 or 9 billion dollars' worth more in U.S. weapons, support for its application to join the European Community, and a big increase in its quota for textile exports to the United States. And for abstaining on the war resolution, China got a $114.3 million loan from the World Bank and a trip around official Washington for its Foreign Minister—the first break in a promised reintegration of the Dengist fascists of Beijing into the free-world comity.

In the middle run and the real world, the key to peace lies in Washington. Those opposed to war—both inside official circles and outside in the streets, campuses and conference halls—have more power than they may think to keep Bush from acting the war party animal. The party of peace must demand that he stick to sanctions, start talking about settlements and moderate the military buildup. Such a course might take six months, a year or longer to "work." But if peace is not worth waiting for, nothing is.

★

PRESIDENTIAL WORDS

The actor President could play the role.
On stage he did inspire, touch, console.
Of course, you felt that anything he said
Was scripted and then stuffed into his head.
The one there now is not a platform whiz,
But, still, you feel the words he speaks are his.
It's good to hear his own words from the Prez.
It's good, that is, except for what he says.

Calvin Trillin

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Exgrassperorating German

JOHN LEONARD

TWO STATES—ONE NATION? *By Günter Grass. Translated by Krishna Winston, with A.S. Wensinger. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 123 pp. $18.95.*

They went ahead and did it anyway, the two Germanys, as if the Berlin wall had been a chastity belt. They're in bed together again, a single two-backed beast, under the sign of the deutsche mark, in spite of Günter Grass, who told them not to. He's been telling them not to for thirty years. He agrees with the Frenchman who said he loved Germany so much, he was glad there were two of them. Which is why Grass has been called—to his face—"a traitor to the fatherland." He hates the very idea of a German fatherland. Look what the fatherland does when the lights are out all over Europe.

This is more than Oedipal rage. The fugitive pieces collected in *Two States—One Nation?* date back to 1961 and all say the same thing. You may feel the war's over; let bygones be bygones; some of our best friends are Germans. But Grass began to write because of Auschwitz. Time passes, and Auschwitz hasn't gone away. Writing after Auschwitz, "against passing time," means using "damaged language" in "all the shades of gray": no more "black and white of ideology," "blues of introspection," "polished literary chamber music," "detergents and all-purpose poetry," but rather "shame on every white page." Maybe another nation could have committed Auschwitz, but only one did. Unless we stuffed our ears with lottery tickets, we must have heard the screaming. "One of the preconditions for the terrible thing that happened was a strong, unified Germany. . . . We have every reason to fear ourselves as a unit." If to say this is to be a traitor to the fatherland—maybe even a "rootless cosmopolitan"—well, tell it to the scarecrow.

According to Grass, nationalism itself is a bacillus. He'd rather see a confederation, a linkage of provinces sort of like Switzerland: "Germany in the singular is a calculation that will never balance; as a sum, it is a communicating plural." Such a plural could communicate in a mother tongue instead of a fatherland, as German-language writers—citizens of a state of mind—have communicated as far back as Grimmelshausen, who made fun of the Thirty Years' War, and as recently as Group 47.

In his fiction and nonfiction, Grass has often obsessed about Group 47, the German writers East and West who met sadly and briefly after the war. Some would try again, with beer and potato salad, between 1973 and 1977. They show up in *Headbirths*, and he's even projected them backward, into the seventeenth century, in *The Meeting at Telgte*. At Telgte we also met the first German novelist, Johann Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen, who gave Brecht the idea for Mother Courage and Grass the idea for *The Tin Drum*, a modern *Simplicissimus*. So has the notion of a commonwealth of writers, "a cultural nation" in the no man's land of Potsdamer Platz, been kicking around for years in Grass's pages.

Grass would wash the taste of shame out of the mouth of the German language.

But Oedipal rage there certainly is—in splendid excess. The Bad Boy of German Letters has been father-bashing, grandfather-bashing and godfather-bashing since he left Danzig. At the gates of Buchenwald, listening to Bach, Nazis wept like wounded bulls. So much for the civilizing influence of high culture. So much for Werther, Brahms and *Buddenbrooks*, geopolitical fairy tales and Black Forest *Unsterblichkeitsbedürfnis*. There's no forgiving the Mandarins, the ideologues or the lyric poets. He quotes in *Two States* from one of his *Dog Years* fairy tales. Nothing is pure: not snow, nor virgins, nor salt, nor Christ, nor Marx. If anything were pure, then the bones,

> white mounds that were recently heaped up, would grow immaculately without crows: pyramids of glory. But the crows, which are not pure, were creaking unoiled, even yesterday: nothing is pure, no circle, no bone. And piles of bones, heaped up for the sake of purity, will melt cook boil in order that soap, pure and cheap; but even soap cannot wash pure.

Against this shameful fatherland of the white mounds and the cheap soap, Günter Grass—pariah, traitor, Dennis the Menace—sticks out his Tin Drum. He will wash the taste of shame out of the mouth of the German language. This seems to me exemplary. We need more such brilliant Bad Boys, even if we lose a few great novels.

Grass grew up in a hurry: at 14, a Hitler Youth; at 16, a soldier in the Panzers; at 17, an American P.O.W.; at 19, an apprentice stonecutter, conscience-stricken by "photographs showing piles of eyeglasses, shoes, bones"; at 25, a poet and sculptor; at 28, off to Paris, where, under the lash of Paul Celan, he wrote most of his amazing Danzig Trilogy.

If you know *The Tin Drum* (1959) just from Volker Schlöndorff's pious movie you will have missed the gusto, and maybe the point, of this Danzig according to Breughel and Bosch, this rhapsodizing and guffaw, the punning and the screaming. Nor am I about to belabor it here. But a brief visit in Book Two to the Western Front, where Oskar and Bebra look at the turtle-shaped pillbox Dora Seven, a compound of concrete and puppy-dog bones, will give you the flavor. A proud Corporal Lankes explains:

> The centuries start coming and going, one after another like nothing at all. But the pillboxes stay put just like the Pyramids stayed put. And one fine day one of those archeologist fellows comes along. And he says to himself: what an artistic void there was between the First and the Seventh World Wars! . . . Then he discovers Dora Five, Six, Seven; he sees my Structural Oblique Formations, and he says to himself, Say, take a look at that, Very, very interesting, magic, menacing, and yet shot through with spirituality. In these works a genius, perhaps the only genius of the twentieth century, has expressed himself clearly, resolutely, and for all time. I wonder, says our archeologist to himself, I wonder if it's got a name? A signature to tell us who the master was? Well, sir, if you look closely, sir, and hold your head on a slant, you'll see, between those Oblique Formations. . . . All right, here's what it says: Herbert Lankes, anno nineteen

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hundred and forty-four. Title: BARBARIC, MYSTICAL, BORED.

And Bebra says, "You have given our century its name."

There is a disdain here for quite a lot of poetry, philosophy, psychology and the nineteenth century's notorious Wagnerian bond with *Nacht* and *Tod*. Oskar, a self-made dwarf whose voice shatters plate glass, isn't symbolic of Nazi culture. Nor is he symbolic of what became of the Germans, poor puppy-dogs, inside Hitler's thousand-year pillbox. Oskar instead symbolizes the German artist, who should have been the German conscience but who chose instead to stay 3 years old forever. Not by accident, as Oskar scrambles with his books up the railway embankment to look at Dora Seven, does he admit to "losing a little Goethe" in the process. Goethe! *The Tin Drum* is the first of Grass's very Grimm fairy tales. As it ends, the Black Witch is gaining on the 3-year-old times ten, in a loony bin: "Black words, black coat, black money."

Likewise, I know what to make of Mahlke's grotesque Adam's apple in *Cat and Mouse* (1961). Mahlke has been asked to swallow too much, including the philosopher Fichte. He's swallowed so much he needs an Iron Cross to cover it up. Nor, for all the time he's spent in church and his fixating on the Black Madonna of Czestochowa, is Mahlke any sort of Christ figure, a Teutonic Billy Budd. As old and as useful to myth as a Son of God is the scapegoat. And scapegoats are usually Jewish.

After the scapegoat in this fairy tale of history comes the scarecrow. Amsel, the half-Jew, constructs these scarecrows in *Dog Years* (1963). They're mechanical marching men: the SA. Amsel will be betrayed by his "blood-brother," Matern, "the bounce back man." Tulla, the satanic pubescent from *Cat and Mouse*, shows up again with her fairy tale about purity; and Dr. Brunies, the first in a long line of luckless Grass pedagogues; and many black German shepherds, leading to Hitler's favorite Prinz, and to the equally black Pluto, hiding underground after the war in Brauxel's mine, with an army of scarecrows, all of them waiting for emancipation and a reckoning.

Unfriendly references abound in *Dog Years* to Kant and Hegel, old Celtic Druids, Prussian oak-tree gods, "the goateed Husserl" and the Hoard of the Nibelungs. Besides, "Schopenhauer glowered between bookshelves." But listen to this:

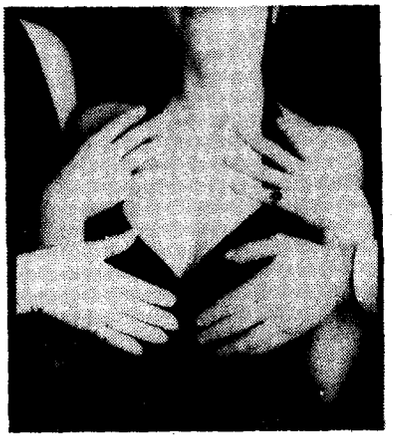
> Has a thousand words for Being, for time, for essence, for world and ground, for the with and the now, for the Nothing, and for the scarecrow as existential frame. Accordingly: Scareness, being-scared, scare-structure, scare-vulnerable, scare-principle, scare-situation, unscared, final scare, scare-born time, scare-totality, foundation-scare, the law of scare. "For the essence of the scarecrow is the transcendental threefold dispersal of scarecrow suchness in the world project. Projecting itself into the Nothing, the scarecrow *physis*, or burgeoning, is at all times beyond the scarecrow such and the scarecrow at-hand . . . "
>
> Transcendence drips from stocking-caps in the eighteenth stall. A hundred caustic-degraded philosophers are of one and the same opinion: "Scarecrow Being means: to be held-out-into Nothing."

And so the Danzig Trilogy ends with a wicked parody of . . . Martin Heidegger! Is this any way to talk to your higher culture? With a slingshot?

It's generally felt that Grass won't write another novel as completely satisfying as *The Tin Drum*. This is because, after the trilogy, instead of staying put inside his characters he was loose on the streets, agitating for social justice and Willy Brandt, animadverting Kiesingers and Globkes, off to Tel Aviv or Managua. John Updike tells us: "Those who urge upon American writers more social commitment and a more public role should ponder the cautionary case of Günter Grass. Here is a novelist who has gone so public he can't be bothered to write a novel; he just sends dispatches to his readers from the front lines of his engagement."

I'd feel more comfortable agreeing for once with Updike if he hadn't missed the point of three of Grass's books. But, yes, Grass has been on the barricades, and barricades get in the way of the lapidary. Personally, I'd blame movies almost as much as politics for the, ah, dishevelment of his subsequent fiction: the impatient cuts, irresolute fades, camera angles wider than subcontinents; a sacrifice of introspection.

But I also see a career in which novels and politics are twinned. Grass seeks to democratize the language *and* the social order. He not only answers all the fire alarms in the culture; he often sounds them himself. And the vernacular in which he sounds them—vulgar, sarcastic, satiric, cajoling, blasphemous, absurd, iridescent; seaport street talk and Magic Realism on the Vistula—has about it all



LIBIDO

Erotica For People Who Like To Read

- Quarterly -

In the U.S. $20
Elsewhere $30
(For surface mail. For Airmail add $20 to Europe and $30 to Asia, Australia and South America.)

P.O. Box 146721, Chicago, IL 60614

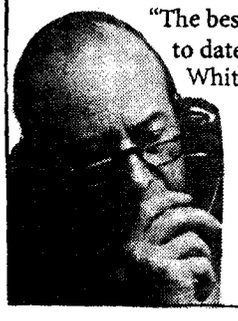
"A superb, penetrating, fair-minded and altogether fascinating study of one of Washington's most brilliant insiders."—Charles A. Reich

Abe Fortas

A Biography
Laura Kalman

"[A] masterly biography."
—Publishers Weekly

"Fortas...is so rich a subject, and Ms. Kalman's research so painstaking, that the book is...fascinating."
—Steven V. Roberts, *The New York Times Book Review*



"The best work on Fortas to date."—G. Edward White 34 illus. $29.95

Yale University Press
92A Yale Station
New Haven, CT
06520

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the acid vehemence of another great German scourge. Think of him as Martin Luther with a sense of humor. Yes, of course, salvation for Grass is all works, and he'd probably rather sit down for beer and potato salad with Erasmus; but I can't help recalling the Ninety-five Theses nailed to the door of a Wittenberg church, and the tract on Babylonian Captivity, not to mention the famous farting contest between Luther and Lucifer. At least in part, the Reformation was about metaphors. And I do believe we're talking about a second Reformation in a West where every possible indulgence is for sale, plastic accepted.

In his own words, Grass is one of those writers who "bolt from their desks and busy themselves with the trivia of democracy. Which implies a readiness to compromise. Something we must get through our heads is this: a poem knows no compromise, but men live by compromise. The individual who can stand up under this contradiction and act is a fool and will change the world." This almost mandates in his prose something messy, voracious, indulgent, hybrid, ad hoc, partisan, avuncular, treasonable and, well, heroic. How many Calvinos do we need, anyway? Or Robbe-Grillets and Tourniers? Enough, already, of this cult of the petit-bourgeois genius.

He wouldn't publish another novel for six years after the trilogy. The political speeches were collected as *Speak Out!* (1969), and there's one important play to mention, *The Plebeians Rehearse the Uprising* (1966), his account of the worker insurrection in East Berlin, Leipzig and Magdeburg. *Plebeians* was disliked in the West because it didn't follow the line of a popular revolt against Communism. It was despised in the East because it was anti-Stalinist and asked the embarrassing question, Where was Brecht? Grass had to go all the way to India to see it performed again, twenty years later, in Bengali.

In *Local Anaesthetic* (1969), Eberhard Starusch, a fortysomething professor of German and history, goes to a dentist. There's a TV set to distract the patients. On its screen Starusch projects his life, his violent fantasies and not a little German history and literature—Goethe again; Kleist and Büchner; "Hegel and Marxengels"; "the late Rilke—the early Schiller"; even Herbert Marcuse—between commercials. Sometimes his private videotape is the only scheduled program. Sometimes the commercial products (deep freezers, hair rinse) represent abstract problems (memory, disguise). Sometimes the screen writhes in "live" coverage of antiwar demonstrators, including Starusch's brainy, disillusioned student, Scherbaum, who wants to burn his longhaired dachshund, in public, to protest against American napalm in Vietnam.

Surrogate fathers and prodigal sons: Starusch and Scherbaum educate each other into the basis for action and the requirements of decency. Being rational "doesn't prevent you from being stupid." Nor does being passionate and sincere. If, as we're led to believe, "Humanity is terrorized by overproduction and forced consumption," the answer may not be the professor's "pedagogical prophylaxis" (because the modern eats the historical for breakfast), nor the dentist's utopian/anaesthetic "Sickcare" (because there will always be pain); but neither is the answer burning dachshunds, nor the mindless violence of the Maoist teenybopper Vero, Scherbaum's girlfriend.

We know what's really cooking: an entire culture, masculine and capitalist, ballsy and greedy.

A passionate youth, a kindly elder, an accommodation: Imagine that, in the sixties. Not exactly, to pick at random, Irving Howe and the New Left; not even, to go all the way back to the fifties, Lionel Trilling and Allen Ginsberg. Pay attention in *Local Anaesthetic* to the counterpoint of quotations from Seneca and Nietzsche. Grass has his problems with Seneca, who was to blame, after all, for Nero. But he *hates* Nietzsche.

So much for Goethe, Heidegger, Nietzsche, etc. Now for the Brothers Grimm. In *The Flounder* (1977), a swamp-monster history of nationalism, religion, nutrition, art, the sexes and the author, Grass unbuttons himself; and it's quite a sight, like Rabelais and Lévi-Strauss doing the dirty. His nine chapters are the months of pregnancy and the Ages of Man. They give birth, out of the sea and the amniotic soup, to the New Woman, who may be almost as revolutionary as the potato.

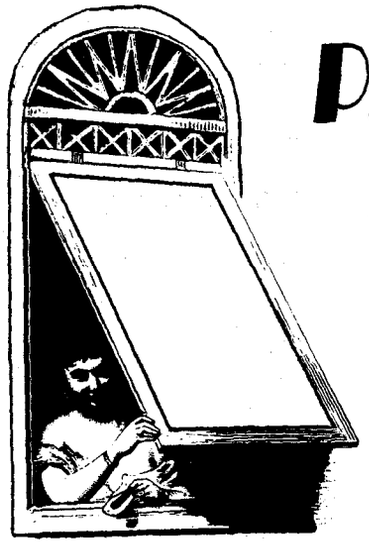
Our flounder is borrowed from an old, Grimm, typically punitive and typically misogynistic folk tale. He pops out of the Baltic, near (of course) Danzig, the first male chauvinist fish; immortal. In Grimm, the fisherman who caught this talking turbot was so impressed with its gift of gab that he set it free. In gratitude, the fish promised to fulfill the fisherman's wishes. This good fortune was subverted by the greed of the fisherman's wife, Ilsebill, who asked for control of the moon and the sun.

According to Grass, the Flounder, back in Neolithic times, hated matriarchy and signed on as a kind of Kissinger to the fisherman, teaching him power politics, leaking the secrets of metallurgy and the Minoans, stirring up a stew of war and wanderlust, of restless Goths and final solutions. Like the fish, the fisherman is immortal, a masculine principle mindlessly replicating itself, and sexually allied down through the eons with successive Ilsebills—invariably cooks, invariably pregnant, invariably symbolic of the status of women from the Stone Age to 1970 in society, fantasy and other metaphysisms. Thus: a three-breasted Awa, who suckles man to happy stupor; Iron Age Wigga, who invents fish soup; Mestwina, reconciling paganism and Christianity; ascetic Dorothea, who bakes a Sacred Heart into High Gothic bread dough; Fat Gret, a goose-plucking nun for whom "the young sons of patrician families were an appetizer: tender asparagus tips"; Agnes the kindhearted, Amanda the potato-faced, Sophie the Virgin, Lena the Socialist, Billy the Lesbian and Maria of the Buttermilk.

We meet Opitz and Gryphius, the seventeenth-century poets who'll reappear in *The Meeting at Telgte*. And there are broad burlesques of the Teutonic epic: more godfather-bashing. And before the talking turbot is tried by feminists for crimes against the distaff, there will be many odd recipes, including one for toads' eggs fried in the fat of stillborn baby boys. But we know now that what's really cooking is an entire culture—masculine and capitalist, ballsy and greedy. We eat our role models, those mushrooms and that excrement. It makes a writer want to vomit.

The Meeting at Telgte (1979), written as a seventieth birthday present for his old friend Hans Werner Richter, is more Oedipal mayhem and anticipates

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Pssst ... Attracted by Religion but Afraid Someone Will Find Out?

You can't shake off the allure of the Immense Questions — love, death, goodness, suffering, and the meaning of it all. You're bummed out on various secular panaceas — old nags such as Leninism, technology, egotism, and consumerism. You sense that *the* answers are the ancient answers — those in the tradition of Moses, Jeremiah, Jesus, Augustine, St. Francis, Aquinas, Dante, Thomas More, Tolstoy, Kierkegaard, Newman, Eliot, Buber, Niebuhr, C.S. Lewis, Martin Luther King Jr., Dorothy Day, Archbishop Tutu, and Mother Teresa. But you're a thinking person, and you've been told by your peers that self-respecting intellects don't need "fairy tales."

Well, maybe it's time to think more deeply, cast off your inhibitions, and probe the romance of religion.

Recently *The New York Times Magazine* discussed the NEW OXFORD REVIEW in the context of an article on the "return to religion" among intellectuals. Indeed, we at the REVIEW are in the vanguard of today's new intellectual enchantment with what Daniel Bell terms "the sacred." Among other things, we examine religious commitments that yield progressive and humane social consequences, and we scrutinize the religious dimensions of the great thinkers, issues, and events of the past and present.

An ecumenically-minded monthly magazine edited by lay Catholics, we've been characterized by George Will as "splendid," by the University of Chicago's Martin E. Marty as "lively," by *Newsweek* as "thoughtful and often cheeky," and by *Utne Reader* as "fascinating" and "surprisingly original." Those who write for us — Robert N. Bellah, Jean Bethke Elshtain, John Lukacs, Christopher Lasch, Norman Lear, Michael Lerner, Robert Coles, and others — are pathfinders who express themselves with passion, style, and lucidity. No need to feel embarrassed in our company!

Sure, there are other magazines and journals which focus on religion, but the NEW OXFORD REVIEW is unusual in that it is neither barrenly academic nor narrowly denominational, neither ideologically predictable nor safe and evasive. We get the juices pumping.

If you yearn to spring out of the iron cage of secularism — but don't want to land in the lap of the ayatollahs, cultists, or fundamentalists — subscribe today! (Or, if you're already out of the cage — or were never in it — keep the juices flowing and give us a try!)

(Please allow 2 to 8 weeks for delivery of first issue)

SPECIAL DISCOUNT RATES FOR FIRST-TIME SUBSCRIBERS

- ☐ One-year subscription. . . . . .$14 (regularly $19)
- ☐ One-year student, unemployed, or retired person's subscription . . . . . .$12 (regularly $16)
- ☐ Two-year subscription . . . . .$23 (regularly $35)
- ☐ One-year Canadian or foreign subscription . . . . US$17 (regularly $22) Payment must be drawn in US Dollars
- ☐ Sample copy. $3.50

NAME (Please print or type)

STREET ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP CODE

Send coupon or letter. Make check payable to NEW OXFORD REVIEW. Mail to:

NEW OXFORD REVIEW
Room 59
1069 Kains Ave.
Berkeley, CA 94706

PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY ORDER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

much of what Grass says later about mother tongues and fatherlands. In fact, these poets never made it to Telgte in 1647 to talk about language and peace as the Thirty Years' War was winding down. Still, a novelist dreams: What if, like German writers in 1947, they had met and drafted a statement? After all, poets alone "knew what deserved the name of German. With many 'ardent sighs and tears' they had knitted the German language as the last bond; they were the other, the true Germany."

Meet Birken ("one wondered why so much beauty should have a need of theory"); Büchner ("so ponderously silent that his mute periods have been cited as figures of speech"); Gryphius ("thunder even when he lacked lightning"); Rist ("Logau's wit . . . was corrosive because it lacked wholesome humor, and because it lacked wholesome humor it was no better than irony, and because it was ironical it was not German, and because it was not German, it was intrinsically 'un-German and anti-German' "). Even the composer Schütz, according to Grass, *could* have been there, where he can't have heard much music: "To set such a drama to music, one would have to unleash a war of flies." Eavesdropping, of course, is Grimmelshausen. Grass identifies with Grimmelshausen as Mann identifies with Goethe. This is because Grimmelshausen and Grass are both funny. (Goethe once said: "How dare a man have a sense of humor, when he considers his immense burden of responsibilities toward himself and others? However, I have no wish to pass censure on the humorists. After all, does one have to have a conscience? Who says so?")

Thirty years is a long war. These poets would actually *prolong* this war, in order to refine the German language and its "rhymed yearning for death." Instead of soup, they "sank their teeth into phrases and sentences: easily satisfied word-ruminants, finding, if need be, satiety in self-quotation." Besides: "No one was willing to give up merely because reality had once again put in an objection and cast mud at art." Finally, of course: "This verdict of universal guilt amounted to a universal acquittal."

They perfect a petition, but as the inn burns down the petition burns up: "And so, what would in any case not have been heard, remained unsaid." No great loss: less "soul-mush." But something in Grass is tickled by these poets' clubs—Fruit-bearers and the German-minded; the Cucumber Lodge and the Order of the Elbe Swans—and something in him looks among these beer kegs and milking stools and wanton wenches for a saving "thistle." Honor? Comrades?

Zeus had the first "headbirth," springing Athena: "A paradox," says Grass, "that has impregnated male minds to this day." It is also a parable of art. Grass Zeusifies. His *Headbirths* (1980) is a lively mess, placenta and all. In no special order, although often in circles, *Headbirths* contemplates the 1980 elections in the German Federal Republic; a dead friend; movies; children; Asia; balls of thread; liver sausage; and a fictitious pair of civil servants, Harm and Dörte, who can't decide if they want a child and can't imagine what history will do to them and their Volkswagen.

Grass says writers are the best patriots; even a 'wounded' language might somehow heal the body politic.

Grass approves of children, having sired so many of them, but he isn't sure the world needs any more Germans, no matter how much the authorities deplore a declining birth rate that makes necessary so many Turks to do the coolie work of the Republic. After being a nuisance on the *Tin Drum* set, Grass went off with Schlöndorff to the Orient, thinking cinematic. Maybe they'd make a movie about overpopulation. Like nuclear reactors, overpopulation's bad for the ecology. Grass took these notes; we don't know what Schlöndorff did. The dead friend is Nicolas Born, from Group 47.

Meanwhile, Zeus looks over his shoulder at the critics who ask him to butt out of contemporary politics, as if this morning's news weren't a headbirth of history. At one point he makes himself ten years older than he really is in order to imagine the compromises writers of that age—Eich, Koeppen, Kästner, etc.—must have made with Hitler. To the dead Born, he speaks out loud: "Now that you are dead, I am aging more perceptibly. My çourage, which was doing fine only yesterday, has furled several sails." (Don't believe him.) And: "I'm ashamed." (Maybe so, but he's the only one.)

Möbius, on a bender, gets looped. In Shanghai, among 11 million bicycles, he wonders: What if the populations of China and the two Germanys were reversed? If there were only 80 million Chinese . . . and a *billion* Germans in "the alarming process of self-discovery"? But the Germans, unlike the Chinese, are dying out. Will they end up stuffed in their own museums? On your left, Hittites, Sumerians, Aztecs; to the right, Germans, who were "not mere warlike barbarians, concerned only with sordid gain, mere function without spirit," but victims of an industrial society that depended parasitically for its extravagant standard of living on a South (oil and Turks) that it exhausted. Ought those Germans to have denied themselves *anything*?

Grass imagines Harm and Dörte as teachers who met at a sixties rally against the war: liberal puppy love. Harm will quote Marx on the capitalist law of accumulation through redundancy, and deplore "the lack of long-range views." Dörte frisks among computer projections and deplores "the lack of meaning in general." They feel bad about their civil-servant privileges and vote against ultraconservative Franz Josef Strauss. Since Grass needs them to go to overpopulated Asia to "tabulate and classify" the squalor, he also invents a Sisyphus Travel Agency to arrange "destitution as a course of study." They will be booked into slums from Bangkok to Bombay.

Grass directs: "Long shot of the Indian subcontinent. She, cut off at the waist, covering half the Bay of Bengal, all Calcutta and Bangladesh, casually takes the pill . . . 'It is safe to say that birth control . . . has been a failure in India.' " It's also safe to say that Grass has more fun with his impossible screenplay than he does with Harm and Dörte, who will weary any reader. When Dörte, inside a cave of bats, undergoes a mystical conversion to the cult of a Mother Goddess and withholds her sexual favors from Harm until he agrees to procreate, even Grass is exasperated. With her ball of thread, can't she knit herself a child? Only a movie could make us care about these two. And movies, Grass suggests, are a substitute for the imagination. Take that, Schlöndorff.

But so, Grass implies, are card files and data sheets a substitute for the imagination. They furnish a "vacuum." And the worst possible substitute for the imag-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ination is a politics-as-usual of neglect, a headbirth metastasized. Grass fumes: What nonsense to seek disarmament through rearmament, to combat an energy shortage by stepping up production, to breed reactors instead of Germans, to pile up pork and butter mountains in a world where 15 million children starve to death each year! If he were in charge he would abolish compulsory education and "emancipate" all civil servants by firing them. He'd cut off the electric current at night, to raise the birth rate, and he'd reintroduce as bedwear the traditional German nightcap, to save all the heat that escapes through the holes in our heads. He'd mandate a switch of political systems every ten years between Germanys East and West, giving the German Democratic Republic "an opportunity to relax under capitalism," while, under Communism, the F.R.G. would drain off its cholesterol. More radically, he'd deal with property "as my spiritual property and that of others have been dealt with: seventy years after the author's (that's me) death, his (my) rights enter the public domain; I (as dictator) would extend this benefit by law to all earned or acquired possessions—house, factory, field—so that only the children and some of the grandchildren will be obliged to inherit it or hold it in usufruct. The ones born later will be exempt from this hereditary burden . . . they will be free to make a fresh start."

Ridiculous, of course. Without surplus, there can be no value. This is the sort of irresponsible, antinovelistic "dispatch" digressiveness that so dismays an Updike he neglected to mention any of it in his review of *Headbirths*.

Finally, Grass would ordain a National Endowment, a Museum without Walls in the psychic space between the two Berlins, promoting the history and, much more important, the literature—the mother tongue—of all the Germanys. Writers are the best patriots, he says; even a "wounded" language might (somehow) heal the body politic. "What's wrong with us is neither material nor social, but an emergency of the spirit." Dörte in her Indian sarong confesses: "I'm afraid, Harm. Of us, of everything." Grimmelshausen would advise her: Read Hölderlin. Or Trakl.

Not content with having kissed off the Brothers Grimm in *The Flounder*, in *The Rat* (1987) Grass kisses off fairy tales, period. No more ruined towers, magic mirrors, hungry ravens, dead trees, a comb, a belt, a cherry torte and all those little bones left over after Adolf ate the sleeping princess. "All hope is gone," Grass says in one of the little poems that pepper the text, "for fairy tales,/it shall be written here,/are dying with the forests." The forests are dying from industrial development and acid rain. Without forests, of course, "Children can no longer get lost."

In one of *Rat*'s subplots, fairy-tale characters seize power and demand a re-greening of Middle Europe; they are exterminated. In another subplot, five feminists on a barge in the Baltic search for a vanished matriarchal city; they will be vaporized. In a third subplot, Oskar the dwarf returns as a middle-aged producer of videocassettes, on his way to Danzig-Gdansk, where he'll show films he has already made about the apocalyptic future; he too will be blown up. In yet a fourth subplot, an artist who counterfeits Authentic Gothic for needy cathedrals is tried and convicted—of treason!

Where's the Social Democratic novelist while all this goes on? Either dreaming or marooned in a space capsule orbiting an Earth on which everything has been obliterated except rats, wood lice, a stinging bluebottle fly and a flying snail. In either case, a scholarly She-Rat explains the future and disdains the past. We're also told of new punk religions, hybrid rat-men with blue eyes and blond hair, and the posthistorical significance of Solidarity, the then-outlawed Polish labor movement. (Who knew?)

An alarmist Grass is having black fun with movies as fairy tales, with literature as lies, with art and politics as forgeries, and with rats as symbols of everything the *Herrenvolk* want to get rid of, from scruples to children to, of course, the Jews. It's his own sort of poisoned apple: Wake up, before all of us turn into big, bad Germans!

Fed up with "frozen cheerfulness," "stylized warmth . . . behind burglarproof glass" and "Social-Democratic neither/nor," having had it with people who obsess about the "half-life of their vegetables" and take courses in How to Cope With Grief, Grass sent himself to Calcutta for six months in 1987, where he found more shame. In *Show Your Tongue* (1988) he measures everything, including himself, by Calcutta—"a city damned to offer lodgings to every human misery"; a city he loves in spite of itself, for its Bengali lyrics, sitar melancholy, moonlit courtyards; a city

SUBSCRIBING TO OUR PRINCIPLES ISN'T ENOUGH.

You should be subscribing to our magazine, too.

Because week in and week out *The Nation* brings you the likes of Katha Pollitt, Edward Sorel and Christopher Hitchens in every issue.

They're not only some of the best writers and illustrators around—they do their best work for us.

The Nation.

YES! I WANT TO SUBSCRIBE TO YOUR MAGAZINE, TOO. Send me 24 issues of *The Nation* for $15, a saving of 64% off the newsstand price and 33% off the regular price. I understand that I may cancel at any time and receive a full refund for all unmailed copies.

NAME (Please print)

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

☐ My payment is enclosed.

☐ Please bill me later.

For new subscribers only.
Foreign surface postage: add $7/24 issues.
Air Mail rates available upon request.
Subscriptions payable in U.S. funds.

H0M41

THE NATION
P.O. BOX 10791, DES MOINES, IA 50340-0791

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

END FASHION FRUSTRATION BY WEARING The Nation!

Celebrate *The Nation*'s 125th anniversary this year with our special-edition T-shirt. These high-quality white shirts are printed in red and blue with our 125th logo on the front and our subscription card on the back. They are all cotton and are only $11.95* each, postpaid. Or, for an even better deal, get 3 or more shirts for $9.95* each.

The Nation.

Unconventional wisdom since 1865

YES. Please send me The Nation T-shirt. Enclosed is $_____* for the following shirts:

S___ M___ L___ XL___

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

CITY_____

STATE/ZIP_____

Mail check or money order in U.S. currency to: The Nation. T-Shirts, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011

*New York residents add sales tax. Foreign orders and 33%

that plummets "as if an Expressionist had invented this rush of streets for a woodcut of epileptic collapse. Only the sleepers remain real." In a diary, in anguished little poems and violent smudgy drawings, he limns for us "the acrid smoke of open fires fed with cakes of dried cow dung"; vultures, crows and "child-bundles" living in a garbage dump; old women on funeral pyres at the crematorium "sticking out from under the shroud."

Even at a crematorium, "only the rich can afford sufficient wood. The free-market economy, death as an overhead expense, like everywhere else." Temple-hopping with a sick wife; reading Lichtenberg, Schopenhauer and Elias Canetti; among Bengali poets who can't understand a word of Tamil or Urdu, Grass is beside himself:

> If you lent (for a fee) one of these slum hovels, created from bare necessity, to the city of Frankfurt am Main, and had it set down next to the Deutsche Bank highrise, where the hewn granite sculpture by the artist Bill says yes, always yes to the towering bank, because as an endless loop it loves only itself, is incontrovertibly beautiful and immaculately endorses the circulation of money stamped valid for eternity—if, I say, you replaced that granite celebrating its flawless self, and set down instead one single slum hovel, as authentic as want had made it, right next to the glassy arrogance of the Deutsche Bank, beauty would at once be on the side of the hovel, and truth too, even the future. The mirrored art of all those palaces consecrated to money would fall to its knees, because the slum hovel . . . belongs to tomorrow.

Who will make the revolution that saves Calcutta? Not Marx, says Grass; nor Mao. He looks to Kali, goddess of destruction, "the terrible black mother" with ten arms and a sword, a spear, a shield and a strangling noose; a necklace of skulls and a girdle of severed hands. This is the Kali we see in the temples under a layer of black enamel, palms red, eyes ringed, surrounded by women "equipped with Dracula teeth, holding child-sized men in their talons, biting off heads, hands, and cocks." In a blood-drunk ecstasy, Kali cast down her own consort, Siva, and danced on his stomach. And then, because she was ashamed of herself, she stuck out her tongue. So does Grass.

This is the good liberal, having met despair. V.S. Naipaul went to Calcutta once upon a time, and stayed a minute, holding his nose. Allen Ginsberg went there, too, for a year, and became a nurse. Suppose Norman Mailer went to Israel? Isn't this the sort of thing a serious writer ought to do, booking himself into the nightmares of the century, the unconscious of history, after too many tours of the self?

When Grass left town for Calcutta in August 1987, he was flying away

> from Germany and Germany, the way two deadly foes, armed to the teeth, grow ever more alike; from insights achieved from too close up; from my own perplexity, admitted only sotto voce, flying with me. And from the gobbledygook, the where-I'm-coming-froms, the balanced reporting, the current situations, the razor-elbowed games of self-realization. I am flying thousands of miles away from the superficial subtleties of former leftists now merely chic feuilletonists, and far, far away from myself as part or object of this public exposure.

And now look what they've done: left and right, do-si-do, buck and wing, *danse macabre*. He should be embarrassed. Instead, he allows to be published these unrepentant fugitives, as if a lost cause mattered. As Martin Luther may or may not have told the Diet at Worms: "Here I stand. I can do no other." *A rhymed yearning for death.*

Now that the writers can talk, what will they say to one another: Show me the way to the next BMW? We're advised by publicists for corporate capitalism that if the nonprofit police state is now bankrupt, so too, somehow, is social democracy. To be a good liberal, a practical radical, a ferocious democrat, a self-made orphan, a citizen without portfolio and a prophet without honor; a Bad Boy and a skeptic; a holy fool instead of a court jester; incapable of simplifying yourself in the gridwork of profit-taking and self-congratulation; ashamed of your very own white male perks—well, it's very hard cheese. And certainly not advisable if you want a Nobel Prize.

In some ways it would be easier to write in opposition, from a prison or a psycho ward; in one of the Koreas or Latin Americas or the new black fascisms of emergent and depressing Africa—to have been, before everything changed utterly in 1989, a Konrad or a Kundera or Sinyavsky. They would forgive you then your urgency. They would review your courage instead of your architectonics. You wouldn't be asked for more than one

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

masterwork. Fly the black flag and everyone salutes.

But in our postindustrialized, postmodernized, postsemioticized, post-toastied fairy-tale West, a Günter Grass is needed more than ever and more than masterworks. From men of color in white societies and from women everywhere, we expect dissent, the abrasions of race and sex and class on a dominant culture, the music and sinew of the Other. But how many white male writers of the first rank are citizens before they are author-gods? How many put down the pen, pick up a sword, cut through the fat, gather unto them the children and say: There are wounds that will not heal?

Grass would hate this comparison, but look at France since the death of Sartre. Primo Levi fell down a stairwell. Amos Oz also comes to mind, in *The Slopes of Lebanon*: "What began with the biblical words 'Zion shall be redeemed by the law' has come to 'Nobody's any better than we are, so they should all shut up.' " Quoting Isaiah ("Your hands are covered with blood") and Jeremiah ("For they had eyes but they did not see"), Oz grins: "Veteran defeatists, both of them. Troublers of Israel. Self-hating Jews."

Grass should have left immediately last Christmas—not for Gdansk, never again to be Danzig, but for lovely fragile introspective Prague, declaring himself an honorary Czech. With Havel to Kafka's Castle! Imagine a Grass in Prague for the Velvet Revolution, that Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band. Havel and friends—writers, actors and other jailbird intellectuals—met at the Magic Lantern Theatre, on a stage set for Dürrenmatt's Minotaurus, under a TV tuned to an operetta with the sound off. There they wrote a Social Contract. Timothy Garton Ash tells us that once when they were tired and depressed, students appeared onstage dressed comically as Young Pioneers (red kerchiefs, white blouses, pigtails): "It is the Committee For A More Joyful Present. We have come, they say, to cheer you up—and to make sure that you don't turn into another politburo. Then they hand out little circular mirrors to each member of the plenum." So that the members of the plenum may look at themselves.

Citizen Grass is stuck in both Germanys, but he can look at himself. Now that the wall isn't there, I see him jumping over it with Christa Wolf, to hold hands and ban nuclear reactors. The talking turbot and Cassandra: This picture makes me smile. □

Some With a Fountain Pen

RICHARD PARKER

Of course [I like money]—don't you?
—Ivan Boesky, felon

A nation that cannot get angry at its official betrayers has lost a resource more important than any trade advantage.
—Garry Wills

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.
—a first-century Jewish radical

I should forewarn the reader that, although I was trained as an economist, my economic beliefs are rooted in two men—who are my father and my grandfather. Over the years, the more I have studied the work of professional economists and other thinkers about the material condition, the more I seem inescapably drawn back to patrimony for the ultimate organization of my thoughts. Most of all, I now realize, because they offered judgment and perspective.

My father, a kind and devoted clergyman, taught me, above all, responsibility for generosity and community. He felt that little of real consequence was possible without those two ideals. He looked upon the marketplace with a conditional approval related to his belief that, as men and women, we are flawed yet possessed of the capacity for improvement—especially for the expression of the generosity and community he so valued. I think he saw in the markets dramatic proof of our unwillingness to reconcile ourselves to God.

The lessons learned from my grandfather came mainly through observation. He had been a banker in a small Midwestern town in the years between the two world wars. At a fateful moment soon after the Great Crash, he had proved himself incapable of foreclosing his farmers swiftly enough, not only because many of the farmers were old friends but because he thought the downturn would soon end. The bank failed, and other men came to foreclose his farmers. Soon after, my grandmother suffered a massive stroke that led to increasing mental and physical infirmity. They moved to California, where they lived in a small bungalow on the savings he had preserved, and where as a boy I would visit on warm afternoons. I would often find my grandfather in the garage, surrounded by well-thumbed stacks of *Life*, *Collier's* and *National Geographic*, sitting quietly in a tatty old chair with a small tumbler of wine in his hand and a magazine on his lap. In the gentlest of voices, he would talk to me of Jefferson, courage and equality, never of banking. Then, when I was 12, he died.

I mention this because over the past several months I've found myself reading voluminously—over 4,000 pages at last count—about the financial escapades of the 1980s. It has been, frankly, an informative but ultimately baleful experience, not, predictably, for what it reveals about our financial system but for what is lacking in the very reporting of its failings.

The issue of money and finance is on the front pages these days, in a way quite different from just a few years ago. "The Donald" is no longer the vanquishing lion. Our savings and loans have lost somewhere between $350 billion and $500 billion. Ivan Boesky and Michael Milken are convicted gonifs, and the President's son Neil seems embarrassingly close to a similar fate. On Wall Street the once mighty Drexel Burnham Lambert is gone and there's no E.F. Hutton

Richard Parker is an economist based in Washington, D.C.

IN THIS REVIEW

THE PREDATORS' BALL: The Inside Story of Drexel Burnham and the Rise of the Junk Bond Raiders. *By Connie Bruck. Penguin. 399 pp. $8.95.*

LIAR'S POKER. *By Michael Lewis. Penguin. 249 pp. $8.95.*

BARBARIANS AT THE GATE: The Fall of RJR Nabisco. *By Bryan Burrough and John Helyar. Harper & Row. 528 pp. $22.95.*

THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF HUTTON. *By Donna Carpenter and John Feloni. Holt. 320 pp. $19.95.*

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE: The Outlandish Story of Wedtech. *By James Traub. Doubleday. 379 pp.* $21.95.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to listen to anymore; the stock of Salomon Brothers, the titan of the Wall Street 1980s, trades at 24, down from 56 three years ago. The intractable deficit has caused Washington to re-read lips. There is some very foreboding talk about the commercial banks heading the way of the S&Ls as early as next year. As taxpayers, we now collectively own slightly in excess of $1 trillion in unmarketable real estate, on top of the $3 trillion added by federal deficits in just ten years.

If it weren't for the Soviets—brain dead after seventy years of war, famine and totalitarian brutalities—now insisting they want to be like us, the rational man could imagine no one who would envy this predicament. Even here in Washington, there's a growing sense the jig may finally be up.

Much energy, at least in the daily media, is spent these days on the criminal or near-criminal aspects of the decade's chicanery: Charles Keating and his Senate Five; the insider trading of Boesky, Milken and others; the cowboy banking habits of Don Dixon; or more recently, James Fail, who bought a chain of S&Ls for just $1,000 down. In this there is much merit, since legally explicit criminality plays no little part in what has gone wrong in America's financial system in recent years. The news stories remind us of Woody Guthrie's distinction between bankers and bank robbers. "Some men rob you with a six-gun," he sang (in "Pretty Boy Floyd the Outlaw"), "some with a fountain pen."

But focusing on criminality is not enough. Many recent books on the Reagan era do just that. They are exercises in what I've taken to calling "biz lit," a genre derived from the "polit lit" tradition devised three decades ago by Theodore White in *The Making of the President*. Thus they breathlessly recall in excruciating detail moments in business life of no great historical meaning, while studiously ignoring the wider consequences their subjects' behavior represents. They are (for the most part) profoundly hermetic tales about a rarefied world of finance: If consumers, labor, the environment, the economic strength of the nation or the right of men and women to seek a just society appear, they do so only in footnotes or in the most delicate and infrequent of authorial glosses.

Consider, first, *The Predators' Ball*, by Connie Bruck. Hers is Michael Milken's tale, first published in 1988, then updated in 1989, in time to catch Milken's indictment (but not his conviction or Drexel Burnham's collapse into bankruptcy). The book admirably chronicles the stratospheric rise of this young, middle-class California accountant's son into inventor and paterfamilias of the multibillion-dollar junk-bond market, his notoriety as the country's highest-paid executive (over $550 million in 1987), and the equally meteoric disintegration of both the industry and its founder.

Bruck is a conscientious and able reporter, showing in vivid detail both Milken's central insight (in a world of high interest and investors flush with cash, second-tier companies could raise money through bonds if only the rates were high enough) and his willingness to bend and break rules put in place to prevent outright fraud. She also discusses Milken's drive to reap near-monopolistic profits from domination of the industry he invented (a perpetual habit of capitalists-in-practice that the fervid capitalism-in-theory crowd so hates to mention).

After what the Wall Street boys have done to the economy, who could begrudge two street hustlers a few hard-stolen millions?

Signs that wealth corrupts, while absolute wealth corrupts absolutely, abound; the extraordinary salaries, bonuses and perks paid to youthful dealmakers; the prostitutes wheeled out by the dozens to decorate Milken's annual conferences for the junk-bond raiders (the "predators' balls" of the title); the "embarrassment," as early as 1982, of Milken caught trying to finance Flight Transportation, a company putatively offering jets for charter when it had no jets, and which brought a rash of (quickly settled) investor lawsuits and even an F.B.I. investigation; even—and this is surely postmodernist self-mockery at its finest—the use of a video of Larry Hagman (i.e., J.R. Ewing) to entertain at a company conference.

Yet Bruck is also quick to find for us the Algeresque qualities in all this. Milken is a formidable early riser, at his desk before dawn, working long into the night; his home is a modest, upper-middle-class one in the San Fernando Valley, not chic Beverly Hills or Bel Air; his office organization was a California paean to anti-authoritarian, antihierarchical form, in which he eschewed title and sought to lead by example rather than by rules. ("Watch the movie *Gandhi*," Milken tells Bruck of his leadership style. "It is harder to motivate people if you are in a limousine and others are walking barefoot.") He gives generously to charity. The company even retains an Indian guru, who (a man of the '80s) offers T-groups not on the soul but on strategic planning.

Trying to summarize (in an afterword that addresses Milken's indictment) her own judgments, Bruck wants us to know hers has been no "straightforward morality play of good and evil" but rather a tale with "an element of tragedy." She says she too felt Milken had overreached and needed to be humbled, yet she admired the estimable contribution he had made to "people's capitalism"—although she doesn't mean "people" in the sense that Thomas Jefferson or even Frank Capra might have used the term.

Liar's Poker offers the touch of another blind man approaching Greed as the elephant, but this is a first-person narrative of a young Princeton art history graduate, Michael Lewis, hired (almost by accident, it would seem) to work for Salomon Brothers. The latter is generally nowadays considered the premier Wall Street investment banking and commodities house, and we are first meant to approach it with some trepidation. But along with the author, we soon discover the high-jinks built into this fun-loving boys' club. Partners are given to referring to one another as "Big Swinging Dicks," and the consummate levity is switching each other's suitcases before trips, or covering each other's desks with garbage. In the mortgage department, Fridays were given over to the "the Food Frenzy," when pizzas by the dozen, hamburgers by the hundred and guacamole in five-gallon drums would be ordered in to satiate the hunger of the traders and celebrate the passing of another profitable week.

In the process, the sharp-eyed Lewis also gives us an "insider's" lesson in the creation of the gigantic mortgage-backed securities market and its peddling to the dull-witted officers of S&Ls around the country; tips on how large, market-making firms like Salomon taught their traders to off-load losing positions on hapless clients; the story of the near-disaster of Salomon's own venture into the Milken-dominated world of junk

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bonds; and a witty description of how the firm itself almost fell prey to a corporate raider. By the end, though, it is all too much for Lewis: He resigns to write this book, though not before clearing $225,000 at the age of 27.

But in the end, still miles from wisdom, Lewis encapsulates his experience by letting us know that "there's more to life than making money." At the same time, he wants to assure us he's no softy: It might be nice to think the people we've met through him will one day suffer their comeuppance, he says, but "they don't. They just get richer. I'm sure most of them die fat and happy." Lewis, we note, now lives in a cottage outside London with his wife, an investment banker (and has since sold his tale to Hollywood for what agents call "a substantial six figure sum").

By far the most detailed examination of perhaps the narrowest events in this unbearably vulgar world is *Barbarians at the Gate*, by Bryan Burrough and John Helyar. A 528-page dissection of the two months in late 1988 when RJR Nabisco was taken over in a $25 billion leveraged buyout, the book exhausts us with the vanities of small men (physically as well as otherwise) but doesn't offer much besides a frank exposition of how little these markets are driven by rationality and how much by ego alone. The book makes me hope never to encounter Peter Cohen, Ross Johnson or Henry Kravis, to name but a few, but since Hollywood has purchased this story as well, the chances aren't as good as I'd like.

Next to *Barbarians*, the chief merit of *The Fall of the House of Hutton* can be said to be its brevity. In half the number of pages, it briskly describes how a simple check-kiting scheme (the traffic, normally, of much pettier white-collar criminals; this particular plot is distinguished only by its scale) mushroomed, with the usual assistance of vanity, misjudgment and greed, into the collapse (and takeover) of one of America's oldest and most prosperous retail brokerage houses. If there is a secondary virtue, it is watching George Bush's brother-in-law (a high-level official of the firm) doggedly fumble his way through the thicket, leaving a distinct impression he nonetheless knew more than he later let on.

For sheer theatrical pleasure, there is James Traub's *Too Good to Be True*, an inspection of the Wedtech scandal. Its principal characters are distinctly lower-middle-class, a Puerto Rican and a Romanian Jew, proving that even Archie Bunker could have made millions in the Reagan years, if only he was willing to share the lucre with government officials, investment bankers and lawyers. After what the Wall Street boys have done to the American economy, who can begrudge a couple of street hustlers on the upward mobility escalator a few hard-stolen millions?

Still, something is missing in all these works. It is not merely that all these authors seem oblivious to history, or to their own ancestors (Ida Tarbell, Lincoln Steffens, Upton Sinclair and Sinclair Lewis all come to mind easily), but that they seem so oblivious to the nature of the beast they have, in such infinite detail, chosen to describe. They all but ignore the role of politics in economic life. While they offer insight into how Wall Street fouled its own nest and mortgaged America's future, they never focus on the beginning of the process a

What did our Feminist Foremothers say about Abortion?

Elizabeth Cady Stanton "When we consider that women are treated as property, it is degrading to women that we should treat our children as property to be disposed of as we see fit." (letter to Julia Ward Howe, October 16, 1873)

Susan B. Anthony "I deplore the horrible crime of child murder...We want prevention, not merely punishment. We must reach the root of the evil...It is practiced by those whose inmost souls revolt from the dreadful deed...No matter what the motive, love of ease, or a desire to save from suffering the unborn innocent, the woman is awfully guilty who commits the deed...but oh! thrice guilty is he who drove her to the desperation which impelled her to the crime." (The Revolution, July 8, 1869)

Matilda Gage "The crime of abortion is not one in which the guilt lies solely or even chiefly with the woman...I hesitate not to assert that most of this crime of 'child murder', 'abortion', 'infanticide', lies at the door of the male sex." (The Revolution, April 9, 1868)

Mattie Brinkerhoff "When a man steals to satisfy hunger, we may safely conclude that there is something wrong in society--so when a woman destroys the life of her unborn child, it is an evidence that...she has been greatly wronged." (The Revolution, September 2, 1869)

Victoria Woodhull "Every woman knows that if she were free, she would never bear an unwished-for child, nor think of murdering one before its birth." (Wheeling, W VA Evening Standard, November 17, 1875)

For more quotations and further information, write:
Feminists for Life of America, 811 E. 47th Street, Kansas City, MO 64110 Membership $10

Sponsored by: Feminists for Life Education Project, 16309 Pine Street, Minnetonka, MN 55345
(Donations to FFLEP are tax deductible)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

decade earlier in Washington.

In economics textbooks, politics is an afterthought (an "exogenous variable") to the wondrous workings of the Smithian Hand. In practice, it is the wrist and arm, ganglia and tendons that allow the Hand to operate—and in much more direct ways than even the civilizing Keynesians allow.

In the wake of Watergate and the system-shaking OPEC price hike of 1973, the government launched itself into an orgy of "reforms"—nowhere more evident than in financial markets—meant to reinvigorate our waning economic hegemony. Nixon took the dollar off the gold standard, then set about recycling billions of petrodollars by encouraging banks to make impossibly large loans to the Third World—the consequences of which are now well known. As inflation increased while growth was sluggish (the "stagflation" incomprehensible to orthodox economics), restraints placed upon financial markets after the Great Crash were loosened. Stock market fixed commissions were abolished, margin requirements were lowered, money market funds were authorized, the insurance limit on bank and S&L accounts was raised from $40,000 to $100,000, new insurance for the gigantic private pension funds was extended and a vast array of federal guarantees were extended to a variety of programs, from student loans to middle-class housing mortgages. The government, in less than ten years, set out to assume final guarantees on more than $4 trillion in private risk-taking while at the same time encouraging rapacity on a scale heretofore unknown in human history.

But it was only the beginning. When Paul Volcker announced in late 1979 that the Federal Reserve would no longer concern itself with interest rates, only with the money supply, he settled an esoteric argument for economists—and sent interest rates through the roof. The resulting economic crisis—with some help from the Ayatollah—let Ronald Reagan dance into office, armed with an economic agenda straight out of cloud-cuckooland. Cut taxes, relax even further federal regulation of financial markets, and manna would fall from heaven.

Instead, the roof fell in. The United States plunged into the worst recession in fifty years and the budget deficit (and soon thereafter the trade deficit) went haywire. The S&Ls, already bleeding, started to hemorrhage. Meanwhile, the Attorney General relaxed merger limits, the Securities and Exchange Commission cut rules and regulatory staff, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission just closed its eyes—and the money men went on a long, drunken holiday. Leveraged buyouts became the rage, financed with junk bonds (see Milken and RJR Nabisco, above). The brokers hustled wherever they could to make up for the loss of fixed commissions and the huge new trading roles of pension funds, banks and insurance companies (see Hutton, above).

To be sure, some in Washington grew increasingly concerned. S&L supervisor Edwin Gray was hushed up. Liberal Congress members introduced legislation to restrict the LBOs and junk bonds—indeed, in 1984-85 *thirty* such bills were introduced. But all thirty failed, as Wall Street, the banks and the S&Ls channeled cash from profits back into Washington in the form of PACs, speaking fees and cozy deals. This was the language Washington understood. Ultimately the scandal would take down Jim Wright, Tony Coelho, Robert Garcia, Mario Biaggi and Fernand St. Germain, but that was yet to come. PAC revenues soared—and of course are still rising.

I make this linkage between Wall Street and Washington to underscore what by now should be a central truth engraved in the mind of every American voter: To imagine markets free of politics is to imagine sunlight without the sun. With Reaganism and Communism both behind us, there is room now to build a new kind of progressivism that takes seriously a challenge to the venality of a few that has always masqueraded as the interest of the many. Simply reporting on—or even merely railing against—Wall Street's cupidity produces ultimately only disgust coupled with despair. But exposing and attacking Wall Street's political foundations empowers voters and makes choice possible.

That is democracy's defense, and America's only real hope in the new age rushing so powerfully upon us. That is why I am so deeply indebted to my father and grandfather, who gave me the gift of standing with them, as they stood with others before them, as witness and opponent to the limits that the smallness of some places on the potential largeness of us all. □

ADVERTISE IN THE NATION
Call (212) 242-8400

CLASSIFIED.

While we reserve the right to edit, reject or reclassify any advertisement, The Nation *wishes its readers to know we don't have the facilities to check the promises made by our advertisers, and we have a strong presumption against censoring any advertisement, especially if we disagree with its politics.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HOUSING A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

Constitutional Amendment—XXVII—

No person being a citizen of the United States of America regardless of their religion, national origin, race, color, sex, age, marital status, military service, disability or income shall be deprived or denied adequate affordable housing.

Such adequate affordable housing shall be of such so as not to deprive or deny any citizen of any rights written in the United States Constitution.

Any circumstance or housing that leads to housing arrangements other than adequate affordable housing that shall result in a citizen being deprived of any constitutional rights shall be unconstitutional.

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

YOUR HELP: If you are interested in signing the petition, gathering signatures, lobbying, or coordinating this effort, please write:

D.C., HOUSING A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT, Cooper Station, P.O. Box 281, New York, NY 10276.

(Print and give to others.)

THE RADICAL WRITERS RETREAT at The Berkshire Forum is accepting applications for the April 1991 retreat for 4 or 5 writers unequivocably committed to basic change in our society. Write: RWR at The Berkshire Forum, RD 1, Box 124, Stephentown, NY 12168; or call: (518) 733-5497.

APARTMENT AVAILABLE

NEW YORK UPPER WEST SIDE. Share 7½ rooms with 2 people. Own phone in your bedroom. Excellent old building. Doorman. West Village 10 minutes by IRT. $500, utilities included. (212) 222-8388.

BED & BREAKFAST

LOS ANGELES near Hollywood. Garden setting. Close to tennis, golf. Residential neighborhood. Reasonable. (213) 664-4425.

CAMBRIDGE NEAR HARVARD. Homey, Victorian. Friendly scholarly ambiance. Safe, quiet, convenient, residential neighborhood. Reasonable. (617) 491-1306.

BOOKLETS

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS NEVER CHRISTIAN. 10,000-word treatise, $1. Ray's Study, Box 5435, Midland, TX 79704.

AMERICA RE-COLONIZED! Foreign-owned Brand Names & Corporations—That you thought were American. 2,200+ listed, $10: Includes your state. R. Shutt, Box 114, Gridley, CA 95948.

BOOKS

ANARCHIST COOKBOOK available again! $22, postpaid. Complete edition. Barricade Books, Box 1401-R, Secaucus, NJ 07096.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS

HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS & Periodicals Directory, 1990 edition. 700 entries—subject, alphabetical, geographical. Biennial. $28. MCLI, Box 673a, Berkeley, CA 94701

BOOK SEARCH SERVICES

Wm CAXTON BOOK SEARCH, Box 709, Sister Bay, WI 54234. Send phone/address with wants. (414) 854-2955.

AWAITING YOUR BOOK WANTS. Lorraine Zimmerman, Bookseller at Large. P.O. Box 5854, Berkeley, CA 94705. Locally: (415) 601-1868; nationally: (800) 728-2073.

CASSETTES

GENERAL SMEDLEY BUTLER said, "War is a racket." As heard on public radio, *The Smedley Butler Story.* Half-hour documentary. Cassette: $10.75. Write: Lanset, 328 W. 101 Street, New York, NY 10025.

COUNSELING

WOMAN PSYCHOTHERAPIST, 20+ years experience, Ph.D. in clinical psychology. Insight-oriented and analytic. Crisis intervention; short-term; long-term intensive psychoanalytic approach. Free consultation. Sliding scale. Carnegie Hall vicinity. (212) 582-5508.

MINORITY MALE PSYCHOTHERAPIST (MSW), Professor at NYU—experienced, sensitive, liberal, adjustable fees, midtown Manhattan (Kips Bay). (212) 685-4918.

LOS ANGELES WOMAN THERAPIST, LCSW—couples, families, individuals; systems approach; supervisor/teacher. Santa Monica, (213) 453-5519.

PERSONAL PROBLEMS? Caring, mature, experienced clinical psychotherapist will help resolve them. Short-term treatment where possible. Sliding scale. NYC: (212) 466-6775; Nassau: (516) 484-1249.

EDUCATION

CASA NICARAGÜENSE DE ESPAÑOL

All Nicaragua is a school!

A SPANISH LANGUAGE, POLITICAL AND CULTURAL STUDY CENTER IN MANAGUA, NICARAGUA

NOW MORE THAN EVER, FIND OUT WHAT IS HAPPENING IN NICARAGUA!

- Study Spanish 4 hours daily at all levels
- Live with a Nicaraguan family.
- Travel to different regions of Nicaragua.
- Meet with representatives from government institutions and mass organizations.

For further information, please send self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

CASA NICARAGÜENSE DE ESPAÑOL
P.O. Box 15062
San Diego, CA 92115
(619) 583-5163

YEAR ROUND 2-8 WEEK SESSIONS

¡Speak Spanish like a diplomat!

Learn on your own with audio-cassette courses used by U.S. State Dept. Programmed for easy learning, 47 languages in all. Comprehensive. Call or write for free catalog. **1-800-243-1234** Dept. 661

AUDIO-FORUM® Guilford, CT 06437

EDUCATION

INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Plant trees in

AFRICA

Work on a tree-planting project in Mozambique

12 month group program: 4 months preparation with regional studies, language, technical training and fundraising; 6 months community work in Africa; 2 months community education upon return to the U.S.

Other programs to Angola, Asia and Central America.

For free brochure and application:
IICD, P.O. Box 103-B, Williamstown, MA 01267. (413) 458-9828.

FRENCH*FRENCH*FRENCH Speak the language of Sartre, Zola, Foucault, Derrida. Learn French with a *Nation* intern from France. Call Claire at (212) 242-8400.

SPANISH IN GUANAJUATO. Cultural Center of Mexico. Instituto Falcon, Mora 158, Guanajuato, Gto 36000, Mexico.

SPANISH CLASSES, GUATEMALAN CULTURE. Nonprofit collective; speakers, fieldtrips. Proyecto, 210 East Hamilton, State College, PA 16801. (814) 234-1912.

EVENTS

NATIONAL COALITION AGAINST CENSORSHIP LUNCHEON MEETING

"Free speech and bias on the college campus: What does the Constitution require?"

Speaker: IRA GLASSER, Executive Director, ACLU

Wednesday, December 12, noon–2:30 pm

Ethical Culture Society, 2 W. 64th St. at Central Park West

For reservations, send $25 to: NCAC, 2 W. 64th St., New York, NY 10023. For more information, call: (212) 724-1500.

COME SUPPORT THE NEWSPAPER GUILD
and the striking workers of the *Daily News*
at a Gala Benefit Party at
The Building—51 West 26th Street.
Friday, December 14, 8 pm
Donation: $25.

GAMES & PUZZLES

THE NATION'S BEST Puzzles! Book 6 of these British-style crosswords, $6.95 postpaid. Write E.S. Lewis, 125 Quaker Lane, Rochester, MA 02743.

MERCHANDISE

GOVERNMENT SEIZED vehicles from $100. Fords. Mercedes. Corvettes. Chevys. Surplus. Your area. (1) 805-687-6000, Ext. S-3596.

DEVA Cotton Clothes

For men & women...tops, pants, jackets, nightwear —and much more. Hand crafted in 22 colors. Send $1 for catalogue & fabric samples.
DEVA, a cottage industry
Box NTD1, Burkittsville, MD 21718

Call 1-800-222-8024

MERCHANDISE

CAT LOVERS AGAINST THE BOMB. 1991 Wall Calendar. Great gift idea. $7.95 ppd. Nebraskans for Peace., 129 North 10th St., #426N, Lincoln, NE 68508.

RUSSIAN TYPEWRITERS. $175. New Olympia-Unis. Also others. Jacob Sachs, 251 West 98th Street, New York, NY 10025. (212) 222-6683.

PROGRESSIVE T-SHIRTS, buttons, bumper stickers, postcards, posters. Catalogue: $1. Donnelly/Colt, Box 188-N, Hampton, CT 06247.

MISCELLANEOUS

***THE NATION* IN HOUSTON—AN OXYMORON?** No Way! Plan to join friends of *The Nation* in Space City to celebrate the 125th anniversary of this intrepid publication. To help or for more information, call Barry, days (713) 529-1440, evenings (713) 524-5443.

SUDAN'S FAMINE: One implores the government to allow food aid to be sent to the refugees and to facilitate a diplomatic end to the war. —WMF.

ORGANIZATIONS

Beat anti-male discrimination!! Read

Sexism *The Liberator*

Monthly newsmagazine. Commonsense on gender issues; DIVORCE, employment, image, crime/punishment. Much more. "Feminism" rebutted. It's about time! $20 yr. (Sample $2).

Men's Rights Association
Box 17854 - N Lyons, Forest Lake, MN 55025

PERSONALS

PERSONALS ADVERTISERS

A Nation Box number and weekly forwarding service is available for a one-time $10 charge added to the cost of your classified ad.

CONCERNED SINGLES NEWSLETTER

links compatible singles concerned about peace, justice, environment. Nationwide. All ages. Since 1984. Free sample: Box 555-A, Stockbridge, MA 01262.

CLASSICAL MUSIC LOVERS' EXCHANGE®. Nationwide link between unattached music lovers. 1-800-233-CMLS. Box 31, Pelham, NY 10803.

SINGLE BOOKLOVERS gets cultured singles acquainted. Nationwide. Established 1970. Write: SBL, Box 117, Gradyville, PA 19039, or call: (215) 358-5049.

INTELLIGENT OPTIONS for singles who eschew hyperbole. Member newsletter provides self-descriptions, interests and photos. P.O. Box 4456, Kingston, NY 12401.

PERFORMING ARTS HISTORIAN, DWM, 43. Non-gregarious, but genial and reasonably presentable; busy and self-reliant but considerate and dependable. NYC commuter from NJ shore. Enjoys travel, reading, music, bicycling. Hopes to find sensible, kind-hearted, nonreligious, nonsmoking, preferably petless woman. Note, photo appreciated. Nation Box 695.

ENERGETIC, DJF, 43, NYC math professor, seeks companionship of intelligent, NS man, interested in fitness, music, good food. Nation Box 696.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CLASSIFIED.

PERSONALS

WASHINGTON, DC, WOMAN, 32, exuberant, physically fetching and intellectually voracious (loves jazz, literature, film; well-versed in politics, law) seeks tall, literate, feminist mensch, 30-50 for sturdy liaisons. Nation Box 697.

WIDOWER—still seeking attractive woman, 55+, 5'6", New Jersey, Florida, left politically. W. Bess, 2 Athenia Ave., Clifton, NJ 07013.

ARE YOU A SENSITIVE, thoughtful, funny man, 30-45? If so, write this NYC single mother, 34. Nation Box 694.

SWF, 35+, seeks potentially bonding nonsmoker for companionship, dialogue, family. I most value perceptual honesty. Baltimore. Hiking, folk music, Indian food. Nation Box 693.

SWF PROFESSIONAL, middle-aged, athletic, musical, traveler, scholar seeks SM companion, friend, lover, (husband?). Nation Box 698.

SWM, 45, scientist, stable, loyal, playful, fit, seeks SF with brains, heart and good figure for friendship, marriage, children. P.O. Box 282876, San Francisco, CA 94128.

LOS ANGELES DIVORCED MALE, 57, athletic, healthy, vegetarian, professional seeks active, sensitive, creative *Nation*-reading woman. Nation Box 699.

DYNAMIC, LONG-LEGGED NYC journalist/activist, SWF, 30, seeks emotionally and socially aware male. Nation Box 700.

SHF, SAN DIEGO, professional, active in grass-roots progressive politics. Looking left for a nurturing, fit, fume-free SM, 55-65, as best friend to share classical music and life's best. Nation Box 701.

If responding to a Nation Box number send replies to: Nation Box _____, The Nation, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

COMMUNITY JOBS, socially responsible jobs and internships. Subscribe to the only nationwide newspaper listing, covering lobbying, organizing, environment, disarmament and more. $20/6 issues. COMMUNITY JOBS, Box NAT, 1601 Connecticut Avenue,NW, #600, Washington, DC 20009.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

WORK IN NICARAGUA

APSNICA is seeking volunteers in all fields, skilled and unskilled to work in Nicaragua. Architects, building tradespeople, computer personnel, engineers, mechanics, medical personnel, English teachers, planners and others are encouraged to contact us. Call: 213-455-1340; write: APSNICA P.O. Box 1151, Topanga, CA 90290.

GOVERNMENT JOBS $16,412-$59,932/year. Now hiring. Your area. Call (1) 805-687-6000, Ext. R-3596 for listings.

PRO BONO COORDINATOR. Full-time position with responsibility for recruiting and placing public interest work at private law firms. Strong interpersonal, writing and computer skills required. Salary: mid-$20s. Send résumé to: NYLPI, 135 E. 15th St., New York, NY 10003.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR for progressive, multi-issue organization. Labor background helpful. Salary from low $20s. Résumé: Long Island Progressive Coalition, 1 Ireland Place, Amityville, NY 11701.

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR with McKenzie River Gathering Foundation, an Oregon progressive foundation. Experience with nonprofits and social change issues required for this Portland-based position. $21,000-23,000, health and dental insurance. EOEE: Affirmative Action Employer. (503) 233-0271.

MANAGING EDITOR: *Socialist Review* seeks motivated, creative individual for half-time position on growing, innovative radical intellectual journal. Women, people of color encouraged to apply. Musts: word processor literacy on IBM-PC, some production and editorial experience. Familiarity with *SR*, Ventura helpful. $11,000/year plus medical. Brief political/intellectual description, résumé and writing sample to: *SR*, 3202 Adeline, Berkeley, CA 94703.

RESOURCE MANAGER for nonprofit women's peace organization. Manage resource department, from design and marketing to stocking and selling literature and gift items. Salary: $16,500 plus generous benefits. Send résumé stating background and interest to: Pamela Jones-Burnley, WILPF-Personnel, 1213 Race St., Philadelphia, PA 19107. Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

ASSOCIATE EDITOR, *Multinational Monitor*, a monthly magazine reporting on multinational corporations, the environment, labor and development worldwide. Salary: $12,000-$15,000. Two weeks vacation; excellent health benefits. Send résumé and writing sample to: Robert Weissman, *Multinational Monitor*, P.O. Box 19405, Washington, DC 20036.

POSITIONS DESIRED

INTELLIGENT, ARTICULATE FORMER *NATION* INTERNS skilled in research, fact-checking, editing and writing looking for meaningful employment in New York, Washington and elsewhere. Available starting immediately. Call Peter Meyer at (212) 242-8400.

***NATION* INTERN** seeks meaningful employment in feminist/progressive organization in New York, Washington or Boston area. Skilled in research, writing, television production, French. Call April James at (212) 242-8400.

PUBLICATIONS

THE PEOPLE. Marxist biweekly. Since 1891. 4 months/$1. 1 year/$4. The People (N), PO Box 50218, Palo Alto, CA 94303.

LEFT BUSINESS OBSERVER — a monthly newsletter on economics and politics worldwide. "A salutary antidote to the economic mush in mainstream periodicals." — Alexander Cockburn. One year $18. Left Business Observer (Dept. N), 250 West 85th Street, New York, NY 10024.

NICARAGUA: La lucha continúa...
Barricada Internacional,
biweekly news from the FSLN.
Now bilingual. Sample free!
$35/year; $18/6 mo.
Barricada USA-N, PO Box
410150 SF, CA 94141

TECHNOCRACY—TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIAL DESIGN available for $3 from Technocracy Inc., Continental Headquarters, Savannah, OH 44874.

DELOS
Box 2880 College Park, Md 20740
Subscribe: 4 issues, $20.

"This is a wonderful, eclectic, new review, one that has a rightful place in any literature collection. Recommended."
The Library Journal

Translation Mysteries Peacefully Plumbed
Richard Wilbur, Henry Taylor, John Frederick Nims

The VOA in China: A Reminiscence
Philomena Jurey

CRISIS IN THE GULF, a useful pamphlet for teach-ins and community education. Also, *Perspectives on the Gulf*, a 30-minute videotape featuring Hon. Henry Rouss, Admiral Eugene Carroll, Marcus Raskin and Eqbal Ahmad. Both are available from Institute for Policy Studies, 1601 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20009. Call: (202) 234-9382, ext. 249 for pamphlets; ext. 218 for videos.

SMALL TOWN, the voice of small town America. Articles on planning, preservation, attracting industry, housing, shopping malls, central business district improvement and other matters of interest to small communities. Individual membership in The Small Town Institute, $30. Box 517, Ellensburg, WA 98926. Just out, "Promoting the Arts in Small Communities," $6. Special prices for bulk orders.

CLASSIFIED ORDER FORM

Rates STANDARD $1.50/word, 15-word minimum; telephone and POB numbers count as two words each, abbreviations and zip codes as one. CLASSIFIED DISPLAY 1-inch minimum; camera-ready $60/column inch; not camera-ready $60/column inch plus a one-time setting charge of $15/inch. FREQUENCY DISCOUNTS For consecutive runs only; 4 ads for the price of 3; 10 for the price of 7; 25 for the price of 15. PERSONALS For individuals 2 ads for the price of 1, 4 for the price of 2, etc.; no other discounts apply; *Nation* box number/weekly forwarding service one-time charge of $10; for commercial advertisers standard rates apply.

Deadline Wednesday, 5 PM, 26 days prior to Monday issue date.

To THE NATION
Classified Department
72 Fifth Avenue, N.Y., NY 10011

Enclosed is my check for $_____ for _____ week(s), plus _____ week(s) free.

Be sure to include payment for *Nation* box number/forwarding service or classified display setting charge, if applicable.

Advertiser _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Attach ad, typewritten if possible.

Payment in U.S. currency must accompany order.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SERVICES

EXPERT HOUSEPAINTER—and socially conscious, too. Prompt, neat, reasonable rates. Airless sprayer for large spaces. 10 years experience. References. Free estimate. Call and leave message: (718) 789-1944.

REAL ESTATE

GOVERNMENT HOMES from $1 (U repair). Delinquent tax property. Repossessions. Your area (1) 805-687-6000 Ext. GH-3596 for current repo list.

RELIGION

JESUS FICTIONAL! INCONTROVERTIBLE PROOF, CHALLENGE. Scholarly booklet—$5, Abelard, Box 5652-A, Kent, WA 98064 (Details: SASE).

TRAVEL

EUROPE—$160! from East Coast. Hitch a ride on a commercial jet! Confirmed seats from all locations available at higher rates. AIRHITCH®, (212) 864-2000.

GUEST SUITE in tranquil location above still-aesthetic colonial city of Guanajuato, available to writer, artist, language student. Apartado 399, Guanajuato, Gto., Mexico.

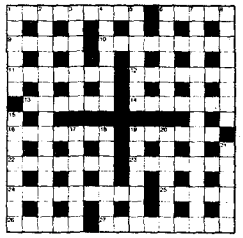
STUDY/WORK/LIVE/OVERSEAS! Plan your next overseas adventure with *Transitions Abroad*, Box 344-56325, Amherst, MA 01004. $18 subscription includes 5 issues plus *Educational Travel Directory* and *Guide to Living Overseas*.

VACATION RENTALS

MONTEREY PENINSULA: Private romantic cottage; fireplace, garden, fully equipped. Information and brochure: (408) 655-0321.

X-WORD PUZZLES

FREE Cryptic Crossword Catalog!



American cryptics and our exclusive British imports. Write: Crosswords, PO Box 69H, Massapequa Park, NY 11762. Or call:

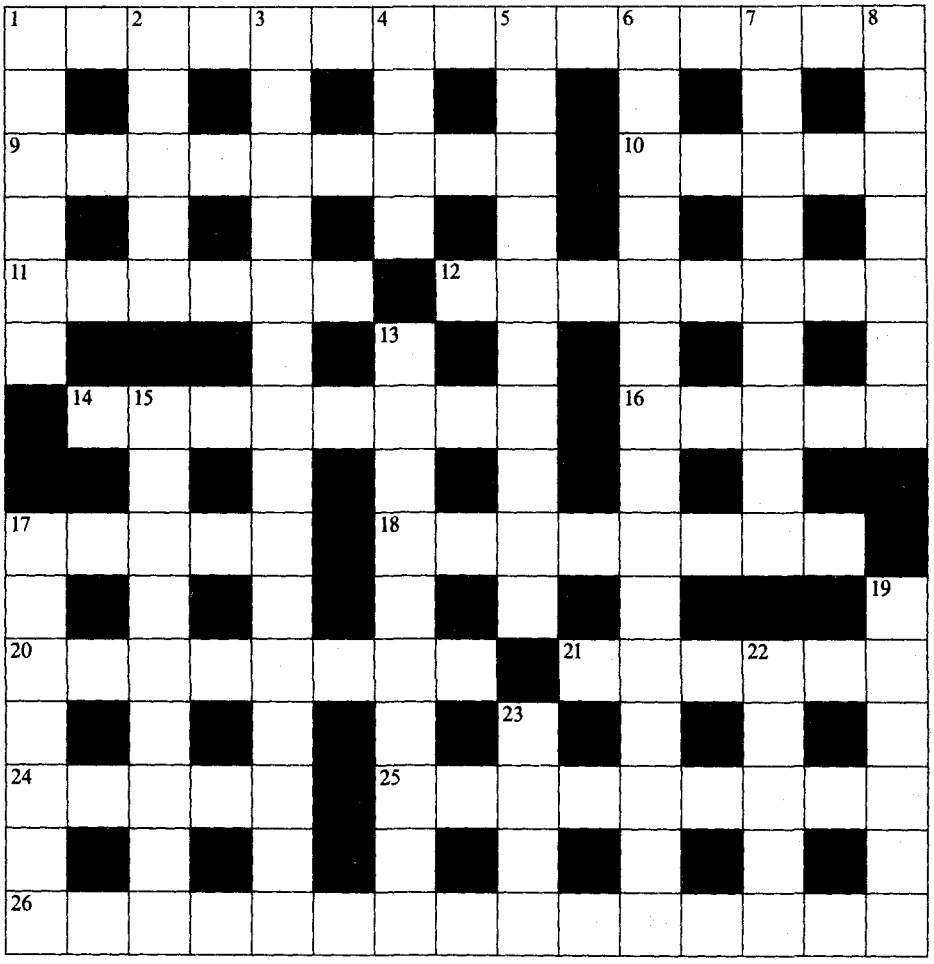
(1) 800-729-1999

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 2316

L	A	U	G	H	I	N	G	■	S	T	O	C	K	S
A	■	N	■	A	■	E	■	P	■	E	■	O	■	T
C	A	T	E	R	■	M	A	I	N	L	I	N	E	R
K	■	R	■	P	■	E	■	L	■	E	■	I	■	E
O	D	O	R	O	U	S	■	L	E	X	I	C	O	N
F	■	D	■	O	■	I	■	A	■	E	■	■	■	G
■	A	D	O	N	I	S	■	R	E	S	T	A	R	T
J	■	E	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	B	■	H
U	N	N	A	M	E	D	■	L	E	S	S	O	N	■
D	■	■	■	A	■	I	■	E	■	U	■	M	■	O
G	O	B	L	E	T	S	■	B	A	I	L	I	F	F
M	■	L	■	S	■	M	■	A	■	T	■	N	■	W
E	Y	E	S	T	R	A	I	N	■	O	K	A	P	I
N	■	A	■	R	■	L	■	O	■	R	■	T	■	L
T	U	R	N	O	N	■	O	N	E	S	H	E	E	L

Crossword Puzzle No. 2317

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 What some people can't keep is a trace of the rest, perhaps. (One should be able to come up with it in private.) (6,9)
9 "Play 'em, Rex!" strangely describes certain models. (9)
10 One might come up with boxcars, as they say. (5)
11 and 19 down Hurried back on the line and took care of not being receptive to a new approach. (6-6)
12 Does it imply being wedded to a cause? (8)
14 If I sign it, I only hope you'll see it's turned on, in anticipation of an old-fashioned spin? (8)
16 What one does to snare a profit? (5)
17 A mark over certain letters—but not if it's a long note. (5)
18 They deal in trouble who argue this way. (8)
20 Shown by logic, once I verify how to give birth to an idea! (8)
21 Rather fancy, but the city will have it shortly, the city will have it shortly. (3-3)
24 A teacher might have made progress in the water with one. (5)
25 The classic revolutionary, with one who comes back to the reunion in the city? (9)
26 Reputedly loving and giving, one came as far from the weekend as possible! (10,5)

DOWN

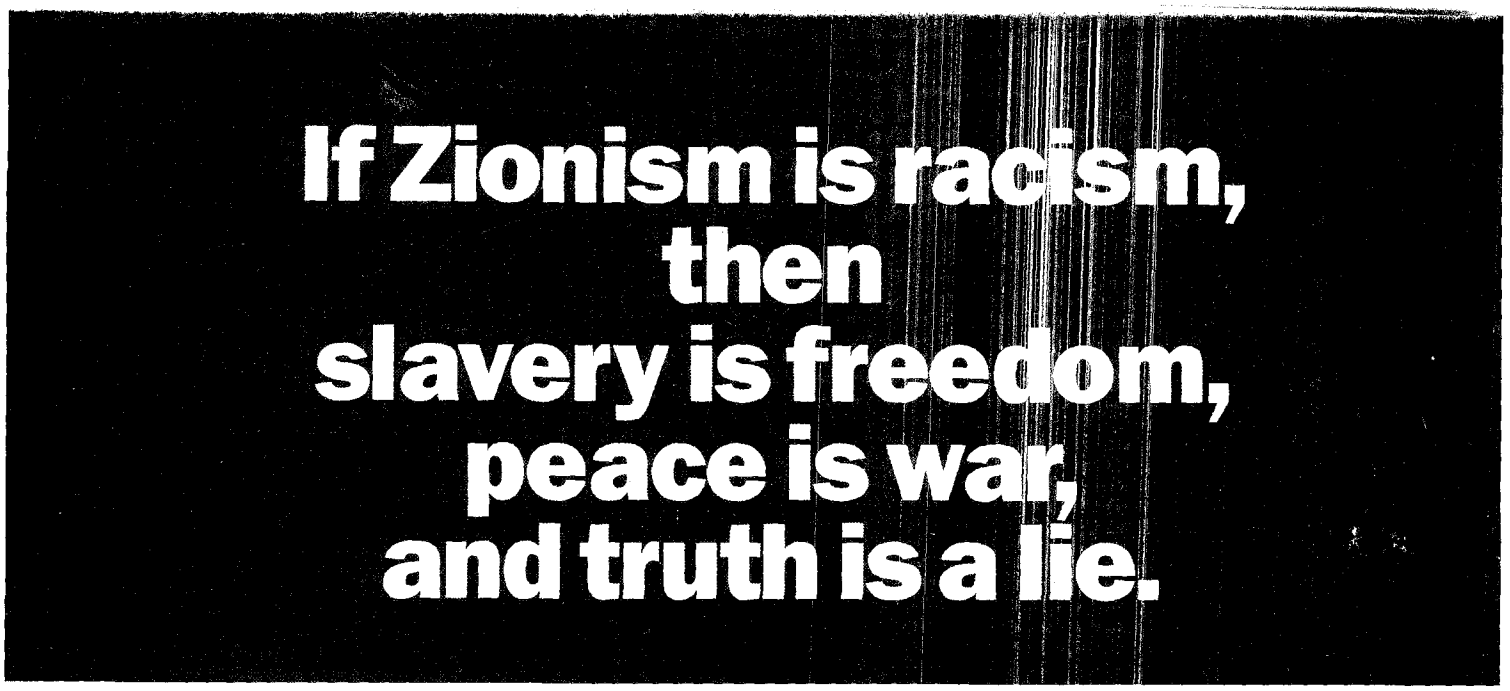
1, 4 and 2 Look at the first number move back and forth without obstruction! (Prepared for action if one does.) (3,4,3,5)
3 If it's blown up, you might see a picture of destruction. (9,6)
4 See 1 down
5 With a deep hole in one, an African makes this. (10)
6 Describing a means of talking that's airy, but phoney? (15)
7 One must have had a long line leading to such a home. (9)
8 Registers type sizes around what accompanies the rock. (7)
13 Put on the serving plate around a well-known daredevil, looks rather messed up! (10)
15 Its mountains are icy, but it describes Eire better! (9)
17 A twisted $10 bill or a common dollar, noted as something a feller might have used. (7)
19 See 11 across
22 A dog brings a fabulous bird up to the soldier. (5)
23 Reputed handyman. (4)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

PUZZLED?

No more cross words. If you don't see why "Lures" are "Ground Rules," send for those of Mr. Lewis to *The Nation*, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



For 15 years, one third of its life, the United Nations has lived with a resolution that defamed the Jewish people by equating its liberation movement, Zionism,with racism and racial discrimination.

The time has come for the U.N. to cleanse itself of this libel, to remove this vestige of its period of extremism and confrontation and to honor its charter.

THE HARMFUL EFFECTS of this Resolution 3379, adopted on November 10, 1975, are hard to exaggerate:

• In the Middle East it retarded the growth of realism and compromise in the Palestinian Arab camp, while encouraging a siege mentality in Israel.

• In the human rights field it confused the issue of racism and thus set back the struggle against real forms of racial bigotry as well as encouraging a tolerance for anti-Semitism.

• It supplied a justification for international terrorism as a form of legitimate struggle.

• And not the least, it swelled the ranks of people who dismiss the U.N. as an "Alice in Wonderland" world filled with mad hatters who might next declare slavery to be freedom.

Today the new political thinking at the U.N. seeks cooperation over confrontation, reconciliation over mistrust.

And so, in the 45th session of the U.N. General Assembly, with the decade of the 1990s promising a world of truly united nations, we earnestly petition the U.N. member-states to repeal Resolution 3379.

BESIDES UNDOING a grave injustice, it will also serve as a signal of peace to those who must ultimately live together in the troubled Middle East.

Repeal the resolution. Restore the integrity of the U.N.

Kent E. Schiner
International President, B'nai B'rith

Peter B. Kovler, Chairman
The Campaign to Rescind the Zionism - Racism Resolution

Thomas Neumann
Executive Vice President, B'nai B'rith

Congressman Les Aspin / Senator Lloyd Bentsen / Senator Rudy Boschwitz / Senator Bill Bradley / Mayor Tom Bradley / Zbigniew Brzezinski / Henry Steele Commager / Harvey Cox / Senator Alan Cranston / Governor Mario Cuomo / Misha Dichter / Mayor David Dinkins / Father Robert Drinan / Peter Edelman / Stuart Eizenstat / Mayor Wilson Goode / Congressman Lee Hamilton / Senator Orrin Hatch / Sanford Hollander / Benjamin Hooks / Irving Louis Horowitz / Senator Daniel Inouye / Senator Edward Kennedy / Senator John Kerry / Coretta Scott King / Philip Klutznick / Rabbi Harold Kushner / Seymour Lachman / Congressman Tom Lantos / Senator Frank Lautenberg / Julius Lester / Senator Carl Levin / Congressman John Lewis / Senator Richard Lugar / Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan / Robert Nathan / Senator Sam Nunn / Congressman David Obey / Congressman Major Owens / Joseph Papp / Joseph Rauh Dmitri Simes / Senator Paul Simon / Senator Arlen Specter / Ted Van Dyk / Congressman Craig Washington / Congressman Sidney Yates

B'nai B'rith International
1640 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED